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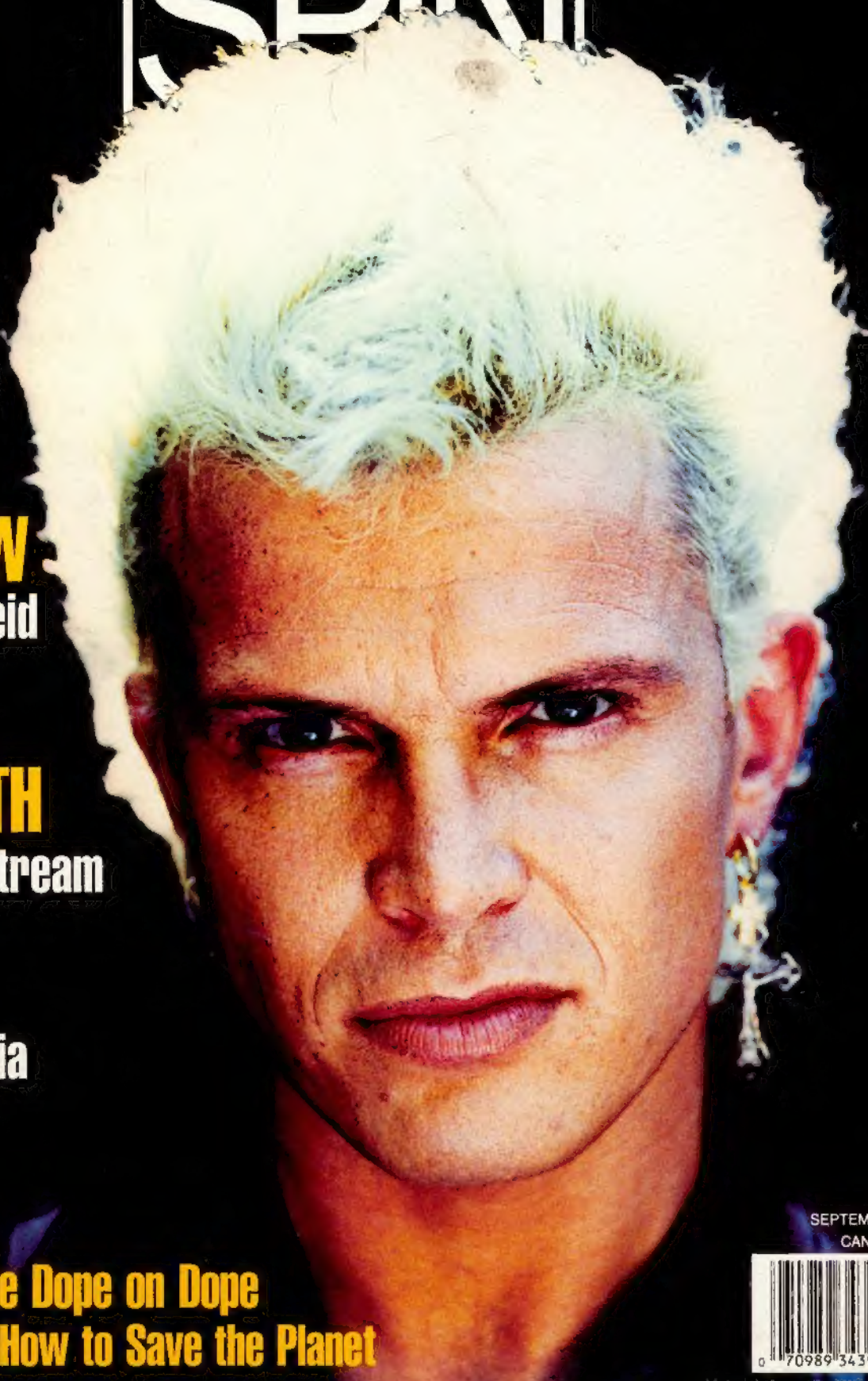

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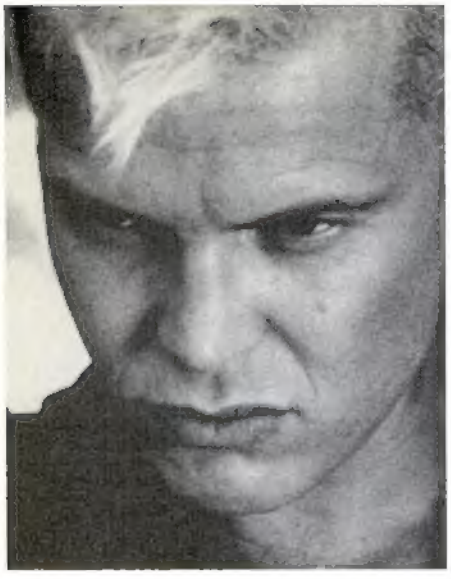

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TOP SPIN

Is it Okay to *Boil* A Flag?

The "Desecration" Controversy In Focus: Are You Pro- Or Anti-Fabric?

To confuse a piece of cloth with the country it represents is the same perversion of logic that claims that a plaster statue is God. But rational folks know that if an icon is shattered, God doesn't die, nor does the universe unravel. Our flag stands for the freedom to burn the flag if we so desire; and that burning, no matter how stupid, can only *strengthen* our republic, not crush it as the fainthearted seem to suggest. Perhaps too many of us exploit this freedom to full advantage, but that's life in a democracy. The present controversy raises the issue of whether we're tough-minded enough to handle freedom right now—when we most need it.

It is astounding that our government should feel threatened by what are, after all, the actions of a mere few frothing loonies who think it's cool to toast Old Glory.

And how inconsistent to fuss over a teeny gaggle of pyroneurotics when the government allows free display of the flag of the Confederacy, an organization so dedicated to the destruction of the United States that they actually went to war against us! Those fellows burned more than our flags. They burned towns. Yet nobody seems to mind all those "cute" rebel flags you see plastered on Ford pickups, or brandished at football games and cross-burnings by slack-jawed, slit-eyed geeks with blond crew cuts and size 300 necks.

We allow them *their* free expression. We even allow neo-Nazis to spew their poisonous drool on *Donahue* or *Crossfire*. So how come a few crummy flag-burners cause such a ruckus?

Answer: because the flag issue is a convenient distraction. It takes our minds off the slumping economy, recent reversals in civil rights, and other uncomfortable realities that are beginning to arouse public awareness. Like other censorship issues, the flag flap is an emotion-directed ploy designed to divert attention from *really* serious problems—and to assign a scapegoat in the bargain.

The real problems revolve around governmental disinclination to serious action against drugs, racism, and Big Industry's profitable poisoning of the planet. So what does the administration attack? Rap groups and people who burn cotton flags.

Silencing the opposition is the traditional technique employed by a power elite whose morality is under scrutiny. And this time the Big Guys must be plenty scared if they're willing to mangle the Bill of Rights just to appear to be doing something useful and oh so American.

From a legal standpoint the tricky problem resides in the definition of "desecration." Just when are you "desecrating" a flag? Most of us would probably agree that burning a flag is, at the least, not a very friendly way to treat it. Still, according to my almanac's section on flag etiquette, burning is the *recommended* way to dispose of used flags, since burning is so dignified!

Now, the problem might be seen as how to define "used." Could one burn a flag that had been waved just a few times, but which one wished nonetheless to send to its reward?

Loads of questions arise. Would the proposed amendment permit boiling or *sterilization* of flags. Cauterization? In a protest that is otherwise lawful and orderly, could one do the following:

Desecrate a *drawing* of a flag? A postage stamp with a flag pictured on it?

Write the words "American Flag" on paper and burn that?

Stick one's tongue out at the flag and call it a "poopy-head?"

Pass gas through the flag? Obviously, going big potty on a flag is desecration, but how about just having stomach cramps *near* it?

Waggle one's pizzle at it? Waggle someone else's pizzle at it? Moon it? Snicker at it? Wave it over a used car salesman?

Wrap it around a speaker while you play 2 Live Crew?

Carry a used gerbil in it?

How far will this madness extend? Once the floodgates of hysterical repression are agape, follow-up amendments might prohibit the following:

Desecrating a photocopy of the Constitution;

Defiling souvenir statuettes of Mt. Rushmore;

Beating any Washington, D.C. sports team;

Screaming out "Abe Lincoln! Abe Lincoln!" during orgasm;

Polluting honest American apple pie with foreign ice cream flavors;

and so much more.

So write your representatives before it's too late. Remember, the saddest desecration of our flag would be the deliberate suspension of the rights our flag represents, including the right to desecrate a piece of cloth. If that's too Zen for the Folks In Power, sorry. But make some noise about this, friends. After all, this is still America, and you have that right. Until further notice.

—Dean Christopher

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POINT BLANK
LETTERS

Edited by Nathaniel Wice

A Plea

I have been a subscriber to your magazine for years, and although I treasure your political insight and musical soothsaying to the extent that I purchased a subscription for my goddaughter in Maine, I know of nowhere in the hetero world where the seamy political infighting in AIDS research is so blatantly exposed, nor have I seen any news of hope for possible treatments except in the pages of your magazine.

You would do a great service to the world by making reprints of the compiled articles on AIDS you have published over the last several years available to the general public. Put them in a book or pamphlet, tell everyone they are for sale, set the record straight.

Let me know when you have done so. I want the first copy to give to my friend who has AIDS.

Terri Bright
Boston, Massachusetts

Senseless Tree Murder and Other Offenses

I was shocked, angered, and extremely disgusted by your article on New Kids On The Block ["Fandemonium," June '90]. I have never heard such cruel and rude comments in my life and they sicken me.

I would like to bring to your attention a quote from this article, which states: "The adulation of every sold-out arena in the country can't mask their lack of musical talent . . . [or] a sound that seems to accept how few people are actually listening." It seems to me that you are the ones who are not actually listening! Their music is not white-bread or wholesome or black or white—it's theirs.

One other thing especially upset me: The use of the adjective "disposable" in describing Jonathan Knight is childish and absurd. Perhaps you have not heard his lead vocals in "White Christmas" on the *Merry, Merry Christmas* album but I can assure you, it is clearly not a rendition that is, as you would say, "disposable." The only thing that should be disposed of immediately is this article and your trashy magazine. It saddens me to think of the trees that had to be killed to print this garbage, which is good for nothing more than to train a puppy on.

Anne M. Murphy
Concerned Citizen
Brattleboro, Vermont

Your Butthole Surfers story ["Texas Crude," July '90] came across as a few ill-used pages giving Dean Kuipers a chance to brag about doing whip-its and drinking himself stupid. Whip-its? What's up for next month? Armpit noises with Jane's Addiction?

Ben Jezierski
Dickson City, Pennsylvania

Ed. note: See page 40

Is it for Real?

After months of brooding about this matter, I have decided to go public with my campaign to encourage you to reconsider the moniker under which your publication currently operates.

As an Asian-American who experiences some symptoms of dyslexia, I find it offensive, disconcerting, and insensitive to the needs of your readership that SPIN should continue to harbor the reprehensible anagram it currently displays every month. On the whole I find your gamazine extremely enjoyable, and have read it on and off for several years. But imagine the horror and bad feelings Asians must endure, particularly those of Japanese heritage, when quickly passing by a newsstand which displays SPIN prominently. To be reminded of the oppression and suffering of one's people in such an ordinary situation can be heartbreaking.

At the same time, I understand that a name change can be a difficult and risky endeavor for a national magazine, so I have enclosed this small list of alternative names for your approval:

TURN (or TURN TURN TURN after the Byrds' song)
TWIRL
REEL
REVOLVE (or REVOLVER after the Beatles)
WHIRL
ROTATE
PIROUETTE
SPIRAL
WARP

You may be able to come up with better names, but I hope I've started you thinking about the issues at stake. I will be in touch with you further concerning this matter in a few weeks. I have already spoken to several Asian-American civil rights organizations in New York who seem to think I have a legitimate case.

[Name Withheld]
New Haven, Connecticut

Ed. note: If you still don't get it, read SPIN backwards.

Creative Expression

I would like to commend you on an excellent publication. Now that I realize this is coming out like a gross, ass-kissing fan letter, I may as well say that the editorial content is also of a high standard, and I frequently use reviews as a basis for my record splurges. Here is a drawing [see illustration] I made after hearing about a law in Los Angeles that prohibits the sale of "explicit lyrics" to minors. It seems strange that a minor is given the responsibility to drive a three-thousand-pound automobile, operate a war machine on foreign soil, or buy cigarettes, but is found incapable of deciding what music is appropriate. (Wow, my first letter to the editor.)

Michael K. Brooks
Chicago, Illinois

Address letters to the editor to: Point Blank, SPIN, 6 West 18th St., New York, NY 10011. Please include your phone number.

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MILLER LITE. WHERE LESS FILLING REALLY TASTES GREAT.

FLASH

Edited by Frank Owen

one love

Monie Love arrives in this country with a rep as the only British rapper who matters.

If you want to move house it's your business; if you wanna move from south London to west London it's your *business*. So I moved from London to New York and I feel it's my *business*." Monie Love means business. The 20-year-old English rapper is responding to those of her fellow countrymen who felt betrayed when she relocated to the U.S. last year. After racking up a couple of U.K. hits with "I Can Do This" and "Grandpa's Party" (her tribute to Afrika "Baby" Bambaataa), Monie (née Simone Johnson) realized she'd better expand her horizons if she wanted to make a living at this hip hop dodge. Family considerations also played their part in the move: Monie's clan is divided between America and Jamaica, and a peripatetic upbringing in Brooklyn, Battersea, and Strong Island means that her new address in Jamaica, Queens, didn't feel like too much of a dislocation. Since arriving on these shores, Monie's had the good fortune to be adopted by rap's royal family, the Native Tongues; the association with De La Soul, Latifah, the JBs and A Tribe Called Quest has led to video and live exposure as well as records ("Buddy," "Ladies First" and "Doin Our Own Dang"). But breaking bread with the cream of the crop, she insists, doesn't automatically qualify you for a merit badge. "I'd just like to say this: Everybody dwells on the fact that I'm in such a good family and in such good hands and so on, but don't think that just because all these groups are around me it makes it easy. De La Soul could have given me eight bars on their record and I could've said the wackest rhymes and done the wackest part in the video. Same with the Jungle Brothers. I coulda bin weak, I coulda bin wack—everybody could have been pointing at me goin' 'who's that English girl? Get her off!' Credit to them for looking out for me and making me part of the family, but they didn't make me. All that input in there was me—they gave me the opportunity and I used it well." Decidedly a solo affair, Monie Love's debut album, *Down to Earth*, nevertheless features some impressive collaborators: Fine Young Cannibals' Cox and Steele helm four tracks (including the radical rethink of "She Drives Me Crazy," which originally brought them together), and the pair brought in stellar instrumentalists Bootsy Collins and Maceo Parker, a hint that hip hop's new direction might involve live players. The Native Tongues connection is maintained by the Jungle Brothers' Afrika "Baby" Bambaataa, who handles eight tunes, but surprisingly there are no blissed-out Afro-eccentric grooves or eclectic fits of sampling; *Down to Earth* is a fitting title for this hard-hitting set from the most prodigiously gifted new wordsmith of the 90s, the only British rapper who can breathe the same rarified air as her adopted family.

—Steven Daly

CHRIS CLUNN

HEAVY ROTATION

Staff Selections

The Breeders *Pod* (4AD/Rough Trade) Girls! Girls! Girls! Kim Deal (Pixies) and Tanya Donelly (Throwing Muses)—a supergroup only if you read too many British music papers—break no new ground on *Pod*, but who cares? Sparse arrangements, slight, winsome melodies, brilliantly minimalist guitar: This record is better than either of their "regular" bands' last efforts. Shows what you can do when you don't try so damn hard. (Greer)

Dustdevils *Geek Drip* (Matador) Recorded in 1988 and just released on ex-Homestead honcho Gerard Cosloy's new label, *Geek Drip* is "influenced" by Sonic Youth in the sense that Sonic Youth were "influenced" by the Ramones. Relocated (to N.Y.C.) Anglo-Australian couple Michael and Jaqi provide the guitar squall and plangent vocals; their ex-rhythm section provides the murky beat. Possibly guitar rock's next small step forward. (Greer)

Mojo Nixon *Otis* (Enigma) Mojo puts the brakes on his partnership with Skid Roper (at least temporarily) for this amusing, and refreshingly musical, solo gem. Lawyers, high society, and Don Henley are among the pet peeves that get crushed here by Mojo's avid preference for monster trucks and sex. He even gets pseudo/psycho-patriotic with a bid for president and a radical reworking of the national anthem. (Blackwell)

Masters of Reality *Masters of Reality* (Delicious Vinyl/Island) First released in 1988 on Def American (the band broke up soon after), the Masters' album is back. Chris Goss (vocals/guitar/songwriter) is carrying on the tradition, mastering the perfect blends of metal and melody. As a bonus, there's "Doraldina's Prophecies," not found on the original release. (Spencer)

Was (Not Was) *Are You Okay?* (Chrysalis) This funk is surreal: Memphis Horns with Frederick Barthelme lyrics. Just check out the titles: "I Feel Better than James Brown," "I Blew Up the United States," "Elvis' Rolls Royce," "K-Mart Wardrobe." The Was Brothers survey Americana with an archivist's knowledge of soul styles, even including a Soul II Soul riff on "How the Heart Behaves." A must (must not) listen. (Skipper)

Eric B. & Rakim *Let the Rhythm Hit 'Em* (MCA) In the wake of countless imitators, it's difficult to remember what a radical listening experience Eric B. & Rakim's first album was. The third album—much delayed due to internal squabbles—is no classic, but Rakim's rapping styles still cause chills. (Owen)

KIRK TUCK

OUT OF A SILENT PLANET

Combining mysticism and melody, Kings X is not your average metal band.

"Driver, we must find oceans of beer." The car slouches through an oppressive wash of melting asphalt fumes and comes to rest in the heart of a tin-roof warehouse district in Houston, Texas. We pound on the door of this micro Mexican cafe, which is kept locked, and escape the murderous sun.

And there we wait for King's X, a pliant, elusive metal band whose radiant, mysterious second album, *Gretchen Goes To Nebraska*, has quietly melted everyone's tired ideas of what headbanging's allegedly all about. In fact, after scrapping hard for 10 years in the Southern bar belt, *Gretchen* has left King's X poised to baffle and overload an audience who've been stripped of any kind of emotional or material complexity. Which means they've become oracles for any kid with an ear for The Righteous. And yet they are ... esoteric. The gray neighborhood seems to fit their low profile, and in one of these dusty buildings, the power trio is locked into preproduction songwriting for their third album.

Bassist/vocalist Doug Pinnick pokes his Mohawk coif into the shadows of the bar, followed by drummer Jerry Gaskill, guitarist Ty Tabor, and their producer, Sam Taylor—the man who became a legend producing video for metal Texans ZZ Top.

King's X aren't so shiny. They aren't brash. They're not haughty or rude or vicious or instantly confrontational. They're not classic rebels. Sometimes you have to ask them to speak up. They don't barge into a joint and tell everyone within earshot that they're deities.

Under Taylor's slow-handed guidance, King's X have sunk their very groovy metallic plow into a field of lyricism only busted in the past by the likes of Todd Rundgren, Rush (*2112*), Kansas (*Point of Know Return*), Genesis (*The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway*), or even Queen ("Bohemian Rhapsody"). Harmony-drenched and full of mystical or downright Christian imagery, *Gretchen* might be most easily regarded as a new Homeric ballad—full of soul-searching, voyages, and raptures. *Gretchen*'s title came from a roadie's parody of that old fart-rock.

Too heavy? No. The melodies are so infectious, the hooks so fat, and the metal guitar dope so resinous that King's X don't come off like they're hawking sullied old fantasy. No concept albums from Narnia or someplace you forgot to believe in since you got kicked out of Bible school.

"I don't see that there is necessarily this concept behind us and that is what everything is about," says Jerry, who wrote the difficult and sappy story that became the liner notes to *Gretchen*. "I just see us as three human beings and this happens to be who we are. And if that comes off as religious or mystic . . whatever people get from it, it's in there somewhere, cause life is just life and all three of us are livin' our lives."

King's X have a fanatical, fist shaking following in England, having toured as headliners and in support of Anthrax. Some English 'zines say Kings got a stronger reaction in '89 from the crowd at the Marquee in London than Guns N' Roses did in '87.

"There have been fan letters that people have written [that] made me want to cry," says Ty. "And I'm not somebody who cries."

"Some life and death things—which really scare me, nods Doug. "I mean, we just want to play music. People are going to take things further than we—well not meant [to], but they're going to take it to where they need to take it. That will always surprise me, 'cause I don't consider myself an icon or leader at all."

—Dean Kuipers

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FLASH

scouse pop unplugged

Best known for his production work with Echo and the Bunnymen and The Fall, Ian Broudie is the Lightning Seeds— pure pop classicism in an age of DJ remixes.

The atmosphere of Britain's present singles chart is akin to a pop Klondike, a get-rich-quick bacchanal where bands can forsake their guitars and sense of shame for a hit at the hands of the DJ du jour. So no one was more surprised at the U.K. success of The Lightning Seeds' "Pure" single than Ian Broudie, the Liverpool outfit's sole member.

The guitar-pop classicism which makes their *Cloudcuckooland* album such a captivating set is a beautiful anachronism; the affecting vulnerability of Broudie's vocals is reminiscent of such sensitive Brit songsmiths as Stephen "Tin Tin" Duffy or Matt Johnson before he misplaced his marbles.

"Subconsciously," Broudie admits, "the record was made as a reaction to what's going on, the lack of emphasis on melodic structures. I was going out and buying records, then suddenly finding that I had this growing pile of records in my room that I don't ever want to listen to more than once. It's like having too much chocolate or something."

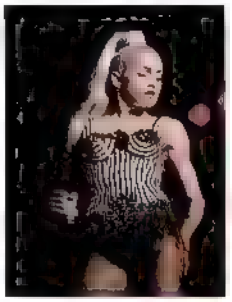
The approach to writing was therefore back to basics, with studio technology unplugged in favor of simple guitar/bass/drums arrangements augmented by a tinny Casio keyboard/drum machine. "My theory was," Broudie explains, "if I can get tracks happening in that shape then they'll definitely have something about them."

Until now best known for his production work for Echo and the Bunnymen, The Fall and The Icicle Works, Ian Broudie next returns to the console for Factory Records' latest signing, Northside. Ironically, bands from his native Liverpool have lately labored in the shadow of those from their more affluent neighbor Manchester, but Broudie feels that the town is on the verge of a resurgence. "When you had Wahl, The Bunnymen, and The Teardrop Explodes, there wasn't really a distinctive sound you could identify, but the thread going through it was an attitude. And lately I've seen a lot of things that have that attitude again."

—Steven Daly

media whore

Madonna's Real Life Top 10



Media manipulator on a mission.

1) Blonde Ambition: Madonna flips the bird to Kurt Loder, passing on the heavily advertised exclusive pre-concert interview for MTV.

2) Madonna Does Arsenio: Madonna expressed herself. Her dirty mouth is common knowledge but the Bette Davis imitation she feels so comfortable with fits her new superstar superfreak persona like Jacko's white glove.

3) Madonna on Arsenio: Tool. Sandra Bernhard on Letterman. Kool.

4) *Interview* magazine: *Interview*: What do you think alternative music is?
Madonna: I guess it's music that's not popular. I mean, alternative to what? I guess it's supposed to be music that makes you think, as an alternative to music that doesn't. *Interview*: So what makes Elvis Costello considered alternative?
Madonna: The fact that he's not popular.

5) Liz Smith, *Daily News*: Liz Smith called Madonna's new release, *I'm Breathless*, "excellent." We're speechless. Babes in Toyland's new release, *Spanking Machine*, bustles with psycho-sexual excitement not found in Madonna's own "spanky" showtune, "Hanky Panky."

6) Daisy, 20 years old: "Madonna should be getting her first facelift now to gain the full benefits in the upcoming years—if she wants to maintain the edge of perfection on which she lives."

7) *Star* Magazine: The Cher vs. Madonna call-in poll voted Cher most popular seminude megababe over Madonna by a good 20 percent.

8) Coupling: Madonna was naive when she married Sean Penn, thinking he was a real movie star. With Warren Beatty she recouped on her mistake, ensuring herself a part in a big summer movie. Having completed the movie, she quickly realized Warren was a has-been movie star and dumped him. The burning question: What famous fabulous misogynist will figure next? Ice Cube or Norman Mailer?

9) Dick Tracy Coffee Mugs: I can't wait for the 7-Eleven Breathless Mahoney Slurpee cups.

10) Twin Peaks: Audrey is Madonna's finest acting role to date.

—Kim Gordon

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BILLY NOVA

Anti-hero

New York's Lower East Side is home to a burgeoning anti-folk scene. And singer/songwriter Lach is its anti-leader.

Lach's debut "anti-folk" album *Contender* arrives with the kind of mythmaking that announced the young Dylan at Folk City or Jimi Hendrix's debut in London. The myth opens with Lach as musical outcast, rejected by the uptight West Village folk establishment of the early 1980s for being a punk. Lach resurfaces in 1984 as the underground leader of the self-dubbed anti-folk scene at The Fort in the Lower East Side. The Suffering Artist: Lach rocks out in anarchistic purity while fellow folkies he helped spawn get wined, dined, and signed: Michelle Shocked, Cyndy Lee Barryhill, and Roger Manning. Then the Visitation of the Prophet: Dylan comes to check out Lach's shows at The Fort, disguised with a scarf across his face. And finally the Crucible: The infamous Tompkins Square Park riots in August of '88 transform Lach into a local legend and spokesman of a radical new generation.

The bloody riot proved to be a catalyst for a new musical scene. Lach says, "What the riot did was radicalize everybody. You were either on one side or the other. I would go to see a noise band like Missing Foundation and Peter Missing would show up at an anti-folk gig. A psychedelic band like Medicine Hat would be playing and the noise bands and the folkies would show up." During the riot, The Fort became an emergency infirmary and a safehouse from the police who were right outside clubbing everything in sight. "In the middle of the panic I started singing 'Kumbaya' and everybody cracked up."

Basically Lach wants to be known for his songs. He claims to have written over 500, influenced by everybody from Hank Williams to Chuck D. Why the album name *Contender*? Lach answers, "In the sacred songwriting circles, I feel like there's a ring of fire on top. Dylan and Elvis Costello and all those people. I'm like this black sheep kid who keeps stepping into the ring. I'm letting people know that I'm there. I'm out in the middle of Main Street. It's high time at noon in songwriting. I want to be considered a contender."

—Charlie Ahearn

Sinead O'Connor: I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got 33512
Robert Plant: Manic Nirvana 54122
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Bonnie Raitt: Nick of Time 54410
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Roy Orbison: Black and White Night (Virgin) 64485

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Randy Travis: No Holdin' Back (Warner Bros.) 34766

Najee: Tokyo Blue (EMI) 44482

M.C. Hammer: Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em (Capitol) 34791

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U2: Rattle And Hum (Island) 00595

The Beach Boys: Made In U.S.A. (Capitol) 64143

Nitty Gritty Dirt Band: Will The Circle Be Unbroken, Vol. 2 (Universal) 93648

Jimi Hendrix: Electric Ladyland (Reprise) 23362

Heart: Brigade (Capitol) 64305

Clint Black: Killin' Time (RCA) 01112

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Michael Penn: March (RCA) 53798

Jane Child (Warner Bros.) 60204

The Statler Brothers: Live And Sold Out (Mercury) 70440

Solti: Tchaikovsky, 1812 Overture (London) 25179

The Black Crowes: Shake Your Moneymaker (Geffen) 52142

Bette Midler: Beaches Soundtrack (Atlantic) 00793

Johnny Cash: Boom Chicka Boom (Mercury) 44574

Fleetwood Mac: Greatest Hits (Warner Bros.) 00796

Winger (Atlantic) 00830

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Hank Williams, Jr.: Lone Wolf (Warner Bros.) 54311

Quincy Jones: Back On The Block (Warner Bros.) 64116

Motley Crue: Dr. Feelgood (Elektra) 33928

Restless Heart: Fast Movin' Train (RCA) 10802

Cher: Heart Of Stone (Geffen) 42874

Stanley Jordan: Cornucopia (Blue Note) 73847

Kentucky Headhunters: Pickin' On Nashville (Mercury) 24740

Led Zeppelin IV (Runes) (Atlantic) 12014

Dion & The Belmonts: The Wanderer (16 Hits) (Laurie) 00999

D.J. Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince: And In This Corner (Jive) 01020

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Skid Row (Atlantic) 01038

Alice Cooper: Greatest Hits (Warner Bros.) 70298

Norrington: Beethoven, Symph. No. 9 (Angel) 00467

Def Leppard: Hysteria (Mercury) 00927

Earl Thomas Conley: Greatest Hits, Vol. 2 (RCA) 53713

Allman Brothers: Eat A Peach (Polydor) 63353

Billy Idol: Charmed Life (Chrysalis) 62264

Taylor Dayne: Can't Fight Fate (Arista) 01114

Peter Murphy: Deep (RCA) 44638

Enuff Z' Nuff (ATCO) 64257

Keith Whitley: I Wonder Do You Think Of Me (RCA) 33768

Horowitz At Home (DG) 25211

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Fine Young Cannibals: The Raw And The Cooked (I.R.S.) 01058

Roxette: Look Sharp! (EMI) 01106

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Kitaro: The Kojiki (Record Of Ancient Matters) (Geffen) 43758

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Big Band Bash (21 Swing Era Classics) (Compose) 10458

Don Seals: On Arrival (Capitol) 63634

The Church: Gold Afternoon Fix (Arista) 71667

Tears For Fears: The Seeds Of Love (Fontana) 33653

Bon Jovi: New Jersey (Mercury) 00516

Aerosmith: Pump (Geffen) 63678

Technotronic: Pump Up The Jam-The Album (SBK) 34781

Tommy Page: Paintings In My Mind (Sire) 60184

Lisa Stansfield: Affection (Arista) 34198

James Galway: Greatest Hits (RCA) 73233

Madonna: Like A Prayer (Sire) 01029

Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris: Trio (Warner Bros.) 14804

They Might Be Giants: Flood (Elektra) 14772

Slaughter: Stick It To Ya (Chrysalis) 42308

Tesla: The Great Radio Controversy (Geffen) 00839

Patsy Cline: 12 Greatest Hits (MCA) 53848

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FLASH

CRITIC'S CHOICE

Half as old as rock itself, is KISS just a joke? Laughing all the way to the bank.

"Tell Guccione he could sell more of these fuckin' pieces of shit if he put KISS on the cover!" Gene Simmons screams. "We'll pretend to be former heroin addicts, soulful white girls who grew up poor and listened to black music, or some group you've never heard of, playing at CBGB under the name Kafka! We'll get pinhead haircuts and look off into the distance when the picture is taken!"

"We'll even talk about AZT and the rainforests," laughs Paul Stanley.

Seventeen and a half years ago KISS first took the stage in their full explosive splendor. Their history is heavily laden with gimmick, hype, and excess—from the blood, costumes, and makeup to Simmons's photo albums of the thousands of women he's "met" on the road. But now the masks are gone, and the liner notes of their twenty-third album, *Hot In The Shade*, feature advice on preventing the spread of AIDS. But despite hints of "maturity," 80 million records sold, and an infinite number of imitators, KISS can get no respect. Critics still consider them to be a calculated, tasteless, juvenile prank. And they are. That's what makes KISS such an incredible band.

"Rock and roll became bitter when magazines started poking fun at artists they helped break," Simmons complains. "But time has proven that critics mean shit. The audience always puts them out of business before they can put us out of business."

"Rock and roll doesn't have to be complicated," Stanley stresses. "If people can't see the humor in what we do, they're idiots."

Opening night of the tour in Lubbock, Texas—home of Buddy Holly and Mac Davis—is a comedy of errors as far as special effects are concerned. The lights aren't in sync with the music, the pyrotechnics aren't up to par, the enormous sphinx's climactic spoken line is mistimed and garbled, and during the encore the backdrop lowers to reveal a huge blinding logo that says "ISS." But it just doesn't matter. The ingredients of what Stanley describes as "the icing on the cake" will need to be remixed, but the cake itself is delicious. After tending to backstage business—one of the lighting technicians is immediately fired—Stanley and Simmons get back down to basics. A beautiful young blond appears and pulls up her t-shirt.

"Will you guys autograph my nipples?" she smiles. Critics are the last thing on anyone's mind.

—Mark Blackwell

Dear Elvis,

Have you ever seen a UFO?

Randall James Moody
Mauldin, S.C.

Dear Randy,

You know, I've seen a lot of crazy sights in my time and I really do believe I saw two or three of them UFO things. But I don't like to go on and on with foolish talk like that or I might sound like a nut or something. "E.T." was one of my favorite movies though. I saw it ten or twelve times. That little girl Drew Barrymore sure has had some bad trouble since that movie. But I seen her and her momma on Gary Collins' "Home" show the other day and she's all right now. That sure was a heartwarming show. I wish now I'da taped it.

Bye now,

Elvis

SOLID GOLD, EASY ACTION

A one woman hit factory, Dianne Warren is currently America's most successful songwriter.

CLAUDE VAN REYE LONDON FEATURES

Michael Bolton calls her the "Hit Bitch." She calls herself "the luckiest person in the world." Most people don't call her anything, they just walk around humming her songs.

Her name is Dianne Warren and she's the most successful songwriter in America. She's written five Number One songs, including Meli'sa Morgan's "Do Me Right Tonight," Bad English's "When I See You Smile," and Taylor Dayne's "Love Will Lead You Back." Some of her songs never transcend formula (Starship's "Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now," another Number One). The best, however, are seamless songcraft, disposable but timeless (Belinda Carlisle's "I Get Weak"). All of them seem most at home on the *Billboard* Hot 100, where she's had as many as seven singles simultaneously. "I write songs that I'd like to hear, and I grew up listening to hit radio," Warren says. "So I guess if I love it, it's going to be pretty damn commercial."

Seven days a week, twelve hours a day, Warren is in her Sunset Boulevard office—alone with her grand piano and DX 7 drum machine—writing songs that sound like pop hits. Six months later they are, but for years no one would listen to them. Her big break came in 1983, when she wrote the lyrics to Laura Branigan's Top Ten "Solitaire." (Warren spent her royalties on a lawsuit with her publishers.) Two years later she wrote DeBarge's "Rhythm Of the Night," and soon became a prime source of the nation's pop wealth. Now Warren could retire and live off her royalties, but she doesn't even slow down. When she leaves her piano to eat dinner, she feels guilty for wasting time she could use to write a song.

Even when she was a child, reading the fine print on record labels, Warren knew she wanted to be a songwriter rather than a performer, although she did make a few errant stabs at fame, including a gig at a restaurant when she was fourteen. "I played one song and the guy paid me fifteen dollars to get off the stage," Warren laughs. "The first money I ever made in show business was to be asked to stop."

Warren succumbed to her stage fright and retreated into happy anonymity; people know her music but not her face. "You know what was really neat?" Warren asks. "I was at the magazine stand a couple of days ago and this girl next to me starts singing one of my songs, "I'll Be Your Shelter" by Taylor Dayne. I look at her and I go, 'I wrote that song!' and she says, 'Oh! Oh, right, yeah.' She didn't believe me.

Warren doesn't mind obscurity. Her place in the industry affords her other pleasures—like flipping radio stations while she drives, looking for her songs. Her greatest frustration comes when singers don't want to record a song she knows will be a hit. Rod Stewart turned down two Warren tunes that hit Number One for other people. Tina Turner rejected "I'll Be Your Shelter" before Taylor Dayne snatched it. Cher didn't want to record "If I Could Turn Back Time." When it became her biggest hit in 15 years, she passed on a message through an engineer: "Tell Dianne that she was right and I was right. Isn't it nice that we can both be right?"

"True Cher style," snorts Warren. "That was her way of saying thank you."

—Gavin Edwards

MARK BLACKWELL

"He's not married or anything.
And he drinks Johnnie Walker Red®."

ULTRA GLOWING GROOVY

Though his songs have found great success on the alternative charts, Ultra Vivid Scene's Kurt Ralske really just wants to be a pop singer.

Ultra Vivid Scene mastermind Kurt Ralske insists his smart pop oddities could easily make the great leap from alternative radio to dentist office Muzak, and he sees that as the highest compliment. "Some of them would make it, the melodies are strong enough; that's what sets apart a great song from an okay song. I think of a great song as a song that anybody could cover; it could be on elevator music, on trombone, or heavy metal guitar, and it'd still sound great.

"We aspire to have great songs that stand up on their own, but also have an unusual, distinctive sound." On their second full-length LP, *Joy 1967-1990*, the band does just that. They use the language of the everyday Top 40 pop hit, but with a twist. They've accented their numbers with risqué lyrics and unexpected delights, like the occasional mesmerizing guitar grind or the carefree delicious vocals of Pixie's Kim Deal.

Ralske, who studied jazz trumpet at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, moved to London around the time the whole C86 scene (with bands like the Jesus and Mary Chain and My Bloody Valentine) was thriving. There he formed Ultra Vivid Scene, the moniker under which he wrote, produced, sang, and performed all the arrangements on the first self-titled UVS record. "It was the first time when people were looking back to the music of the 60s and being inspired by it, but not trying to simulate it. These groups are great because they go backwards and forwards at the same time, which is what we try to do."

Ralske also tries to make a point with his tortured pop songs. Last year's "Mercy Seat," was a tale of S&M and religious power plays, and that theme has carried over onto several tracks on Joy. "I've been trying to show parallels between the attitudes of a masochistic person and of a religious person. Both of them submit to some higher force; the attitudes are not so very different.

"I think it's kind of silly—people running around wearing funny leather clothes—but you could say just to be in love with someone is a masochistic act, because you let them have power over you. To submit is something that most people consider a sign of weakness, but I think it's a necessary part of life, to learn how to both dominate and submit."

—Raymond Rogers

neo-soul review

The old school takes on the new school as Etta James reviews the young soul pretenders.

Soul II Soul's success last year spearheaded the current neo-soul revival—a focus on emotive singing, songwriting, and melody slicked up with hip hop beats and new technology. SPIN asked Etta James, one of the great voices of soul, who scored her first hit in 1955 and has just released *Stickin' to My Guns*, to call the real thing if and when she heard it. At 52, Etta swings—she likes Def Jef, Young MC and Latifah—and never minces words. "I don't like European girl singers, I don't think they're great singers. They're copycat singers, and they're not even good at that."

En Vogue *Born to Sing*
Those girls are some of the baddest things around, they are phenomenal in harmonizing. That's the kind of stuff you don't even hear anymore. You used to hear it in the Moonglows or the Five Keys. As a matter of fact, I can't think of a girl group of that era that could sing that perfect—they must have come from church. That "Hold On" song, that's the baddest song. When I heard that, I thought, it's so old and it's so new.

Keith Sweat *I'll Give All of My Love to You*
Keith is one of my favorite singers. I heard he worked the kitchen in one of these soul-food kitchens, and that's where that "sweat" business came from. But what happened with his latest album? A lot of the stuff sounds alike. When a lot of young artists get a hit record right away, they stop being hungry; their artistic stuff don't roll. I don't think he's going anywhere."

Christians *Colour*
It's good, coming from Europeans.

Beats International *Let Them Eat Bingo*
These Beats International guys, they got a song called "Burundi Blues" that's got a real stupid sound. But some of the most stupid songs make big hits. It's so stupid it sounds cool. I don't know, the rest of this stuff is just experimenting with beats and stuff, and that's cool too.

Family Stand *Chain*
They've got a real good thing going. At least they're singing. They're a good soul group. They're Sly Stone-ish. And they got good messages.

The Chimes *The Chimes*
I just think they're a pretty good little group. They sing a lot like the old girl groups sing. Like the old Chimes or the Chanteles. The lead singer sounds a lot like Regina Belle. Some of the little girl singers got to get some individuality. Don't try to sound like someone, have something different. It doesn't matter if it's perfectly sung—it's the feeling, what happens when you listen to it.

KEVIN WESTENBERG

SANDRA JOHNSON/ISLAND RECORDS

Technotronic *Pump Up the Jam*
They got that little girl. She goes "Pump it, pump it." Now it's really strange because that little girl's really not that talented, but I like her little ways. She got her cap on turned sideways. She grabs her crotch. She reminds me of a little runt hanging out in Harlem.

Soul II Soul *Volume II—1990: A New Decade*
I like Soul II Soul. I think they are so cool. I think they're just like a very modern, very hip remake of Rick James and Sly Stone. They're making hip hop musical and taking it to another level.

—Jill Pearlman

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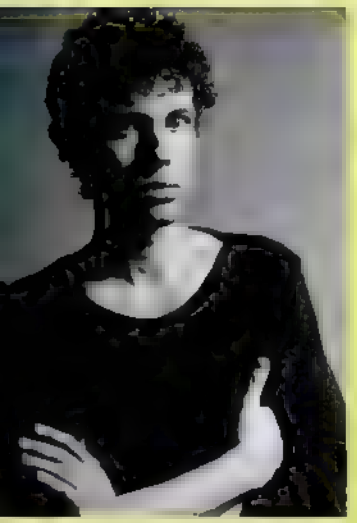
The Dish, The Dirt, The Inside Dope
Sussed By DANNY FIELDS

TALKING ALL THAT JAZZ

In these days when so many die young, a particularly poignant loss was that of keyboard player **Ricky Sohl**, who was taken suddenly in his sleep at the age of 37 by a heart seizure at his Long Island beach house. An original member of the **Patti Smith Group**, Sohl also played with **Lene Lovich** and **Iggy Pop**, and was widely adored throughout New York rock, fashion, journalism, and art circles for his brilliance in matters musical, and his style and wit in matters otherwise. A memorial for him at the Friends Meeting House in Manhattan was attended by hundreds of friends, including **Patti and Fred Smith, Iggy, Lenny Kaye, Lisa Robinson,** and **SPIN**'s own **Legs McNeil**. Patti, admittedly shaken by Sohl's loss, talked about the Thirtieth Psalm, and the importance of embracing life in times when the death of friends is such a constant reality; Kaye spoke of his affection for Sohl and his belief that Ricky was the important musical element in the Patti Smith Group; and Iggy talked very briefly, saying how good it had been to work with Sohl, and how he appreciated his never having anything negative or unhelpful to say about anyone. It was noted by a friend who had visited Sohl's grave that darling Ricky was lying head-to-head for all eternity next to someone named Carmen Miranda . A collection of quotes on the subject of the current censorship firestorm could, of course, fill a book, and no doubt will, but from opposite ends of the evolutionary spectrum, here are two favorites: **John Hiatt**, noting that he's always thought it's a parent's job to raise his or her own kids, said to us that legislating morality is kind of like asking **Axl Rose** to raise your own kids, which is not something he'd like to contemplate. "But you know," Hiatt said, "certain beer companies suggesting that they own the night, to me, is ultimately a whole lot more obscene than anything **2 Live Crew** could get down to." And **Danny Hutchens**, the music director of radio station WRON in Lewisberg, West Virginia, was asked by the music trade magazine *Friday Morning Quarterback* (*aka* the FMQB) if he were "concerned about the recent events surrounding the arrest of 2 Live Crew and where it may lead?" "Hell no," said Hutchens. "I wish they'd send them all to jail." The most dazzling response to the FMQB survey came from one **John Bryant**, a music director at G98 in Portland, Maine. "It just seems like a bunch of right-wing socialists," opined Bryant, "trying to turn the country into something they want instead of what people want, and in their spare time they burn flags." In fairness to the men and women who program this nation's radio stations, though, we must allow that, by far, most of the responses indicated a goodly amount of alarm and distress at the actions of certain judges, police departments, and caretakers of our sexual and moral well-being.



Ricky Sohl: A legendary keyboardist who's gone, but not forgotten.

KATE SIMON

Speaking of right-wing/left-wing issues, a recent letter-writer to SPIN seems to have labeled me a virtual brownshirt without portfolio for having ridiculed in this column a ranting ideologue member of **UB40** who had equated the snooping and prying activities of Russian officials when the band toured there with the baby-sitting activities of the band's record company while they were in New York. Lighten up, Leftie, and hear me now and believe me later as I quote from a recent interview with a man whose sensibilities, caring, and intelligence I have always been in awe of, and would, were it in my power, put him in charge of the world, at least for a while, to see what would happen. I'm talking about the wondrous **Billy Bragg**, whose new album, *The Internationale*, is a collection of 200 years of political anthems, from William Blake's *Jerusalem* to a newly revised *Internationale* itself, put together by Billy and some traveling fellows. "I hope that when the people of Eastern Europe come to forge a new socialism," Billy said to me in a recent one-on-one, "that they'll keep what's good and get rid of what's bad. Stalinism I reject [that one's for you, Mr. Letter Writer from Canada—*D.F.*], Brezhnevism I reject, laborism I reject, but the humanitarian ideal of socialism and communism has got to be preserved. What I fear greatly, and why I recorded the *Internationale* is that we in Europe still have intact our left-wing political culture, and you in the United States, for all intents and purposes, have lost it, during McCarthyism, as a mass movement. All the left-wing activity in this country is in single-issue groups, whereas in Europe all those issues are linked—the fight against racism, the fight for sexual rights, the fight for women's rights, the fight for the environment, pacifism, abortion rights, the fight against nuclear weapons—are all strands woven together by the left. And if we allow the right wing to browbeat us and divide us, we will be that much easier to pick off with our single issues. If I had a pound for every time I've been asked in an interview 'Is communism dead?' I'd be a rich man. This is the word of the times, that it's all over. But what's all over? Stalinism? Thank heavens!! State capitalism? Hooray!! But is the need for humanitarian politics over? No way! And until capitalism can deliver utopia, then the ideas of socialism and communism, in their humanitarian form, and whatever they're called, will be out there, and I think that's cause for optimism." Amen, Billy.

THE DEVIL FINDS WORK FOR IDOL HANDS TO DO

The whiplashed smile, the chiseled cheekbones, and the spiked hair is still there, but now Billy Idol looks almost healthy—and downright cyberpunk, wearing an electronic gizmo to stimulate bone growth of the leg he nearly lost in a recent motorcycle accident. Billy talks to LEGS MCNEIL about life after near-death in L.A.

Powerplant Studios, Los Angeles, July 1990.

I couldn't help laughing. Billy Idol and his new band were taking a break from rehearsing for their *Charmed Life* tour, all of them standing in a semi-circle in front of their gear and playing "crane operators" with the imaginary massive equipment protruding from their crotches. All of them playing the boys with the big dicks.

"Urrrrrrrrrrooooooom, outta the way, don't know if I can get this baby off the ground. . ."

"Roaaarrguuuhhh, whoooaaa, wide load coming through. . . "

Billy was leading the proceedings, acting like the third-grader who has suddenly abandoned his toy dump trucks after discovering he has something much more wonderful to play with and wants to share the fun. And I couldn't help thinking that, despite his close association with MTV, his sex symbol status, his drum machines, and his awesome Los Angeles lifestyle, that the reality of Billy Idol is a lot more punk than anyone would imagine. Or anyone could imagine. When he called his new album *Charmed Life* he wasn't kidding.

Billy and his entourage left the Powerplant to do some impromptu jamming at Club Spice on Hollywood Boulevard. All five hundred or so women in the club wanted to sleep with him, wanted Billy to take them home and they made no bones about it as Billy and his entourage were ushered by a hulking bodyguard through the crowd to the VIP tables.

"Billy, remember me? We met. . . . "

"Billy I really have to talk to you. . . . "

"Billy, Billy, Billy."

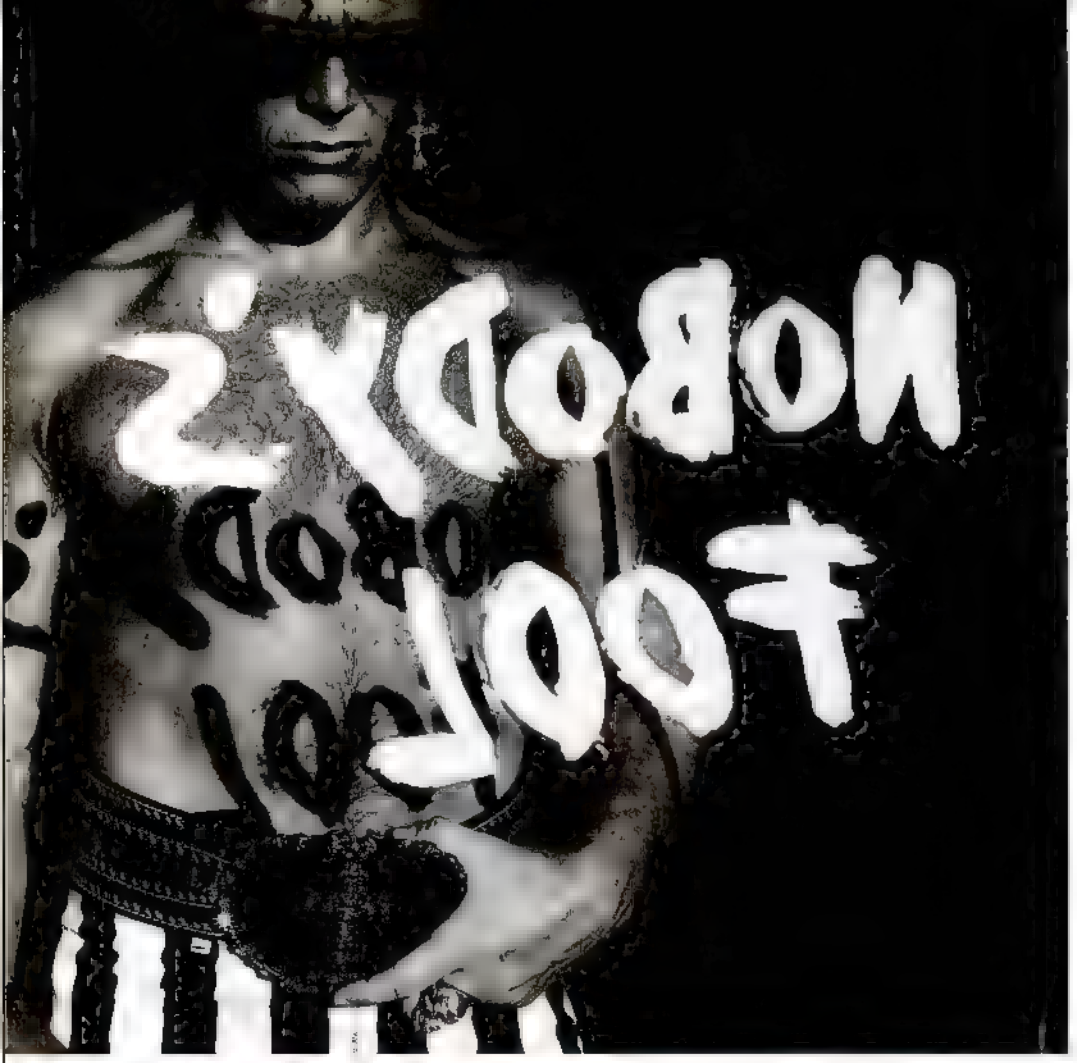
As he sat kissing his date for the evening, a smart looking brunette with bedroom eyes and a body to match, two waitresses standing just out of reach echoed the sentiments of every woman in the joint when one of them looked over at Billy, locked in the make-out session, and then over to his date and said, "Man, she doesn't know how lucky she is."

Feeling self-conscious and rather nonexclusive, his date pulled away to regain her composure, while Idol laughed and argued, "I can't control what the waitresses say!" But he was enjoying the situation. Enjoying being a member of rock'n'roll royalty.

But therein lies the problem, for when Billy was the skinny, sexy, snot-nosed brat of the "Bromley Contingent"—that London-based gang of malcontents that later became the Sex Pistols, Siouxsie and the Banshees—blitzing Britain with punk in the mid-70s, we loved him. As the lead singer of Chelsea, which later became Generation X, we understood the ferocious innocence of Billy Idol, the snarling street punk so desperate for a piece of the pie that he'd change his name to something this ludicrous to get our attention. Idol. Yeah, sure. Ha, ha, ha.

Even when he went solo with the Generation X song, "Dancing With Myself," and later "Rebel Yell" and "White Wedding," we said, yeah, sure, right. But somewhere along the MTV way, the fashion, the pose, the image turned from Billy Idol to BILLY IDOL, as if the name was a prediction rather than a punk play on the image of vapid rock stars. Billy Idol had become an 80s poster child, another Michael Jackson clone, looking all too perfect, made up and coiffed in the correct rock star get up, trying to convince us of how BAD he was.

But unlike Michael Jackson and the other big boys, Billy actually was bad. It was just that through all that video glitz and moussed-out glamour it was hard to tell anymore. It was hard to differentiate the pinup boy from the punk rocker. And it was getting harder to remember just what he had been so authentically bad at. But sitting down talking to him, hanging out with him as he made his rounds on one of his typically untypical days, it started to come back.



ANTON CORBIJN

It's the a[illegible]re dancer and [illegible]ess that comes with [illegible]ing a motorcycle [illegible]st like in rock 'n' ro[illegible]

To me, rock n roll was always the great escape I was one of those kids with no future 'til I got in a rock'n'roll band Because I didn't want to do the normal. I hated the idea of having to work for somebody. So being in a band was really another attempt to get away without working.

"When we first started Generation X we were just tooling around London. We were just doing it. I mean we weren't even thinking about recording contracts. Obviously we were writing songs and making music together and we were obviously thinking that one day we're going to make a record. Whether we made it or not didn't matter That's what was so great about it. We had this innate belief that what we were doing was worthwhile, no matter what happened. And of course when it did get big, it just made us think how right we were. But that wasn't the goal.

"The Sex Pistols were singing 'no future' and there *was* no future aside from what we were doing. It's funny, but we were creating our own future and that was the exciting thing. You didn't live for tomorrow. You really did say, 'Fuck, it's right now that counts.' We just felt the drive of 'Ha, ha, ha, this is our little statement, whatever happens to it, ha, ha, ha.' Even the whole thing of Billy Idol—I started off with I-D-L-E, and then thought, 'We're kings in our own right.'

"I knew that I didn't possess any spectacular singing ability. And because of that I always found it difficult to find people to play with, because by the early 1970s everyone was incredibly caught up in the musical side of rock'n'roll. And in everyone's eyes, I was the least musical person around

"Around the early 70s I went out with this chick who had a brother that loved the Velvet Underground and had all of Iggy's records. And we'd be listening to this stuff like "Heroin" dealing with the darkest side of life, and I'd think, wow, this is great!

"I loved the idea that Lou Reed isn't the greatest singer in the world, but listen to *Coney Island Baby* and tell me that ain't singing. 'Cause it's his words and his whole attitude that goes along with it. And I thought, that's what's missing. And when I heard Iggy, I thought, this is brilliant, because these guys can't play at all, *but they can!* And of course the best thing in the early 70s was playing Iggy's records to everyone, 'cause they hated him!

"It was around that time I was hanging around people who ended up in Siouxsie and the Banshees and the other punk bands, listening to Iggy and at the same time stuff like Frank Zappa, the Mahavishnu Orchestra, things like that. But it was obvious to me that Iggy was the total answer, because I couldn't be John McLaughlin to save me' fuckin' life! I didn't want to stand around communing with nature!

"Then I heard the Ramones' first record and I thought that was fucking brilliant! We got that first record and every song was under two minutes and it was like a revolution! People now probably don't realize it—because it was such a long time ago—just exactly what that record did, but we were playing normal speed until we heard the Ramones and because of them we revved everything up. Everybody did, 'cause the Ramones really had their groove and we were still searching for ours. The Clash, us, everybody. The Ramones were like the next step.

"We were very aware of what was happening in New York—the New York Dolls, the Heartbreakers, Alan Vega and Suicide, all that stuff. And we weren't even thinking recording contracts, but then I suppose the Ramones having made an album made us think.

"I always liked the idea of having to force people to do things. That's what punk rock was all about—well if they don't listen you just go and bang 'em over the head with it! And the great thing was, once me and my friends, people from the Banshees, started to hang out, it was all there right in front of you. Right there in *SEX*, in Malcolm McLaren's boutique on Kings Road, the next fashion, the new this, the fucking next stuff! You'd walk along the road and tell people, "in two years time you're all gonna look like this!" And they'd all laugh at you. Then two years later they have the spiky hair job as well.

"Punk rock was a definite fuck you in a lot of ways. But I think in the end it happened 'cause we totally believed in it—that you didn't have to be a great musician but you were. It was all about discovering yourself rather than everybody discovering you. You discovered yourself and then foisted it on them. I think we were all people who had a lot of potential, but we weren't necessarily brilliant musicians. But we found a way around it. And the way around it was punk rock."

The snarl. All the good ones have it; Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis, Mick Jagger, Jim Morrison, Johnny Rotten and Billy Idol's got one of the best. It's a rosebud mouth, fat and sensual. An inviting, come on smile, and then when he sneers, it juts out like a billboard announcing the moment of orgasm. What he looks like when he's coming and making you come. The face of the "little death." And it's half the reason for his status as a sex symbol.

Sitting across the table from him, in Barney's Beanery in L.A., the whiplash smile is still there, the chiseled cheekbones, the spiked hair—but now the guy has muscles and no mascara. He's fleshed himself out, and gone is the languid pale zombie of yesteryear. He looks downright healthy, especially for a guy who just survived a near fatal motorcycle accident and almost had his leg amputated. Billy is getting around without crutches, but the leg is still pretty mean looking, a gaping hole where his shinbone used to be. And he's looking downright cyberpunk, wearing a battery pack around his waist with a cord down to his shin attached to a gizmo that stimulates new bone growth.

After five operations, an unpleasant withdrawal from the painkillers, and intense physical therapy, Billy recovered. But before the crash, Oliver Stone had cast him in the part of Tom Baker, Jim Morrison's drinking buddy, for the Doors movie. Because of the accident, the Tom Baker role was scrapped and Billy's part was lessened to a series of walk-ons that drew from a composite of Morrison's friends.

Inside Barney's Beanery, although it is lunchtime and less than full, every woman in the place at some point finds herself drifting up to Billy's table to try her luck.

"Excuse me," a plump, all American blonde asks, looking more Missouri than L.A., "Can I have your autograph?"

"Yeah, sure," Billy answers dully, this the fourth autograph in an hour.

"Can you make this to Danielle, she's my girlfriend

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and *she loves you!*"

Taking the pen, Idol laughs, "What's in it for me?" a vicious smile slashing through the adulation like a switch blade through apple pie.

"Oh you would love her, she has long blonde hair, she's adorable, she's really, really cute, big blue eyes."

"Well, I'm single now," Billy teases.

"I should give you her phone number," the girl tells him hopefully, already imagining the White Wedding between her best friend and the rock star.

"Well does she fuck a lot on a regular basis?" Billy asks before he lets her write down the number.

"Yeah," she says shyly. I'm thinking whenever I'm that blunt I get hit, but this girl just giggles. Idol can get away with murder.

"Well I'll phone her up and get her to send me a picture."

"Oh yeah, do that."

"Alright darling, thank you very much" Billy says graciously, then turns to me with a wink and says, "It's worth signing autographs these days; I'll get something out of it." But when we leave, the scribble of paper with the telephone number falls to the floor. I guess there were just too many of them.

I think the weirdest sex I ever had was with this chick in San Francisco on a Generation X promotional tour. The girl was a stripper and lived with this other girl who she was always making it with. When we got back to my hotel she said to me, "Make a fist." It was all pretty exciting and wild because I hadn't done that before.

"But the problem was that she came for about an hour. Then she said, "Well that's it." And I thought, "Thank God for that," because I didn't know I could hold out much longer.

"Then my hand blew up like a balloon. I couldn't walk around with my hand all blown up because I had all these interviews to do the next day. So I phoned down to room service, got a bucket of ice and fell asleep with my hand on the ice. When I woke up the next morning my hand was back down to normal. That was one of my first introductions to America.

"I remember the Sex Pistols and all them saying sex is animalistic and all that. They were right. I think it's always the underlying motive for being in a group. But that was one of the few other motives besides the music.

"But then the whole thing escalated so quickly that by the time Generation X put out the second album we had become quite distant. The whole thing had just drifted and I found myself beginning to pander to young people's ideas about what they wanted us to do. I didn't get into music to start pandering to other people. The whole thing behind punk was getting to do what you wanted. I always loved black singers and black rhythm and blues, and that's what was missing from punk and missing from my music. But it wasn't so much, 'Oh God, I've got to go off and be different,' when Generation X broke up, I realized it was silly to try and be something different. I realized Billy Idol is really what Generation X was all about and the best thing I could do was build on what was already there.

"Bill Aucoin was my manager at the time and he lived in New York, so I moved there. It seemed so natural, because in 1980 New York had so many after-hours clubs, I mean you could find five different clubs a night and never go to the same place twice. And it was going to these clubs that I started to realize just how many people liked "Dancing With

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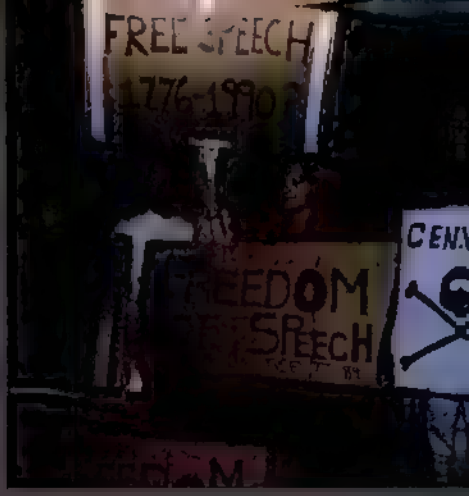
FEAR OF A BLACK PENIS



A media moral panic about their alleged obscenity has catapulted Miami rappers 2 Live Crew to national notoriety. FRANK OWEN reports from Florida.

Living the "do as shook for his new album single "Banned In The U.S.A.," Luther Campbell is Luke Skyywalker no more. And he's pissed.

The nickname he'd been given as a teenager for his fleet-footed activities on the basketball court—and which he carried over into hip hop, naming his Miami-based record label Skyywalker Records—is costing him dearly.

"This multi-millionaire motherfucker George Lucas wants to put me out of business," splutters Campbell. "He wants to destroy a small black business. Get this monkey off my back."

George Lucas, creator of *Star Wars*, doesn't mind the U.S. government using the name of his film trilogy for a satellite defense system—that's good clean family fun, after all—but when a bunch of ghetto Blacks use the name to sell dirty nursery rhymes to white kids...

"That's very different," says Bert Fields, an attorney for Lucasfilms. "First of all, you're dealing with the U.S. government. They aren't our competition. We issue our own records with *Star Wars* trademarks on them. When people go into a record store and see Luke Skywalker all over a record, they associate it with us."

"That's bullshit," replies Luther Campbell. "When you go into a record store and look at a 2 Live Crew album cover you see tits and ass and a bunch of black people. Who's gonna confuse that with a *Star Wars* soundtrack?"

Presently, Campbell is under an injunction preventing his record company from moving half a million dollars worth of product. He has dropped Skyywalker from his company name and renamed it Luke Records, but that didn't keep Lucasfilms's attorneys from succeeding in getting an L.A. judge to declare Campbell in breach of the injunction for wearing a "2 Black, 2 Strong, 2 Live Crew" T-shirt (with a small Luke Skyywalker Records logo) when he was arrested by Broward County police following the now infamous concert at Club Futura in Hollywood, Florida. If he's unlucky, Campbell might end up in jail for wearing a T-shirt. May the force be with him.

The Lucas incident is the downside of a moral panic initiated by an obscure Coral Cables lawyer named Jack Thompson, which has now reached such lofty forums as the *New York Times*'s letters page and *Geraldo*. Corporate cowardice being what it is, Lucasfilms—which according to Luther had been in amicable discussions with his record company for many months previous—is merely reacting to 2 Live Crew becoming a topic of national discussion. But the upside, according to Campbell, is that black people are now mobilizing around an issue—censorship—that traditionally has seemed to effect only whites. "I'm glad this is happening to me," Campbell says. "It's making me strong. People in the hip hop industry are waking up. They're realizing that we've got muscle, that we can fight back."

What is happening to Luther Campbell may be making him strong, but it hasn't politicized him to any great extent. On "Banned In The U.S.A." he asks the rhetorical question, "Is this not America? We have the freedom of expression. We have the freedom of choice. So all you right-wingers, left-wingers, bigots, and communists. There is a place for you in this world. There is a place for your kind, but not in America, because this is the land of the free and

2 Live Crew, sitting on half a million dollars worth of product that George Lucas, creator of *Star Wars*, won't let them move

home of the brave, and 2 Live Crew is what we are."

Confused and disappointing, "Banned In The U.S.A." suggests that a hip hop version of the pledge of allegiance called "Me So Corny" might be Campbell's next musical move.

But if Campbell is unwilling to see the political implications of what he's going through, others are. Recently the New York hip hop community gathered at a downtown art gallery to debate the issue that this isn't just an attack on 2 Live Crew, but an attack on black expression generally. Speaking from the stage, the organizer of the event, Bill Adler, said, "I don't agree that 2 Live Crew are being prosecuted for their misogyny or their sluttiness. They're being attacked as an easy target in a cultural war that's going on right now." And one of the frontline warriors in that war is Jack Thompson.

Recently, Thompson sent a letter to Bruce Springsteen: "I would suggest 'Raped In The U.S.A.' as your next album. . . . Mr. Springsteen, you're now harmful to the women and children who have bought your albums."

Like many a campaigning Christian with access to a fax machine, Coral Gables lawyer Jack Thompson devotes his day to feeding the obsessions of American public opinion, especially concerning the sexual abuse of children and women. Thompson says he became an anti-pornography crusader after he defended a woman in 1984 accused of child abuse who was herself a victim of rape and abuse. Obsessed with obscenity, Thompson is a man on a mission, declaring his conflict with 2 Live Crew merely "an opening shot in a cultural civil war." Even the Florida bar association became alarmed by his zealotry, insisting he take a psychiatric test. "I passed. They found there was nothing wrong with me," says Thompson proudly. Like MC Hammer, Jack Thompson wants to save the children. But Thompson's idealized kids exist only in his head, where 14-year-olds never say "motherfucker" and infants never get erections.

Recently, Thompson sent a letter to Bruce Springsteen protesting the Boss's decision to permit Luther Campbell to use the chorus of "Born In The U.S.A." on "Banned In The U.S.A." Headed "Re: Your Facilitation of the Sexual Abuse of Women," it read in part: "I would suggest 'Raped In The U.S.A.' as your next album. . . Mr. Springsteen, you're now harmful to the women and children who have bought your albums."

The origin of Thompson's feud with 2 Live Crew is in dispute. Thompson claims it began when a mailing from a right-wing California family group called Focus On The Family convinced him that the lyrics of *As Nasty As They Wanna Be* were obscene. Campbell claims that it began when Luke Records released female rapper Anquette's single "Janet Reno," in praise of a current state attorney who at the time was running for that office. One of her opponents in that race was Jack Thompson.

"He's a failure in life," says Campbell of Thompson. "He's jealous because I'm a successful black businessman. He's taking out his frustrations on me."

SPIN: Is it the violence towards women or the explicitness of 2 Live Crew that you object to?

THOMPSON: The wedding of the two together. I believe that when you wed sexually explicit material with imagery that brutalizes, humiliates, or degrades women, then that can cause some people in effect to act out those images. If you have the *f*-word nine-thousand times on an album, that wouldn't make the album obscene in a legal sense. If you had explicit descriptions of sex acts, that wouldn't necessarily make it obscene. The fact that this sexually explicit and violent album has been aggressively marketed to both adults and children is the reason we're sitting here. It would never have gotten this far otherwise.

But Luther Campbell says he deliberately made a clean version of *As Nasty As They Wanna Be*, *As Clean As They Wanna Be*, to avoid such a charge.

Well, Luther is a liar. They didn't make a clean version for the purpose of marketing to children; they made the clean version so they could get radio airtime and raise the visibility of the *Nasty* album. Luther himself admits that thirty percent of the *Nasty* album has been sold to children. Industry estimates are higher, probably around eighty or ninety percent. [*Ed. note: Industry sources contacted by* SPIN *said such a figure is at best a "guestimate," though it is fair to say that a large proportion of 2 Live Crew's audience is under 18.*]

What do you say to the argument that this is dance music, first and foremost? That the lyrics appear much more offensive when written down than when heard in the heat of the dance floor?

I was more concerned about this after I bought the album and listened to it than by the transcript of the lyrics I first saw. To me, there's a more compelling, more disturbing message when you actually hear it on the record than when you see it in black-and-white. There's a power to music: Music wedded to sexually explicit material that calls for the brutalization of women is even more dangerous than if it were on a printed page and distributed to children.

How do you reply to Luther when he says if you want clean music, clean up the streets, clean up society?

Let's put Luther in the analogous shoes of Joseph Mengele. If Joseph Mengele were to say, "I'm abusing people, sexual or otherwise, because that's simply reflective of what's going on in society, and therefore I'm not culpable for my role in this," I think most everybody in this society would disagree with that. Luther Campbell is criminally culpable for trafficking in obscenity that glorifies the brutalization of women and trafficking it to children.

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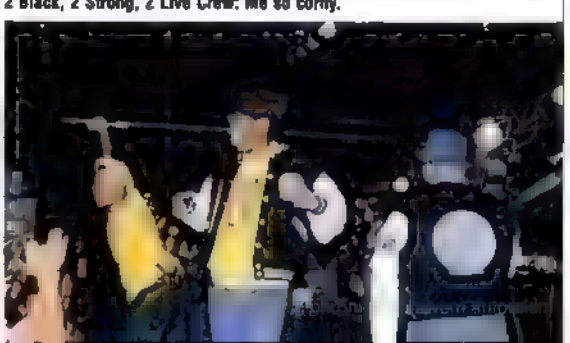
2 Black, 2 Strong, 2 Live Crew: Me so corny.



D. MINNAR

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when DAN QUAYLE FAVORED LEGAL POT

And other stories the media won't tell.

By JEFFERSON MORLEY

STEVEN SUPPA PRESS

Everybody must get stoned?

In early 1977, Dan Quayle was high on the decriminalization of marijuana. Quayle, then a first-term congressman from Indiana, was quoted in the March 16, 1977, edition of the *Fort Wayne News Sentinel*, as saying that Congress should "definitely consider" decriminalizing possession of marijuana.

The future Vice President, according to reporter Mark Helmke, "said any congressional action to decriminalize possession of marijuana should be coupled with strong controls against driving under the influence of the drug." Quayle said he was disturbed by the "disparity" of the law enforcement efforts. Instead of expending time and effort to catch and prosecute marijuana users, Quayle said, "We should concentrate on prosecuting the rapists and burglars who are a menace to society." The headline on the story was "Quayle in Support of Taking a Look at Legalized Pot."

The reaction of the media and professional politicians to this minor but interesting story is a case study of how the public debate over illicit drugs is manipulated and distorted.

David Beckwith, spokesman for the Vice President, insists that the *Sentinel*'s story is "not true." According to Beckwith, "The reporter asked him [Quayle] on the fly whether legalization should be considered and Quayle was dismissive. The reporter pressed on and Quayle said something like, 'I suppose we could think about a lot of things.' That got turned into the story. There was no proposal, no speech." The Vice President, Beckwith says, "has never advocated or favored the decriminalization of marijuana."

Mark Helmke, the reporter who wrote the story, has a different version of what happened.

"Quayle and I had a friendly relationship," Helmke explained in a recent telephone interview. "I was the paper's political editor; he had just been elected to Congress. We had breakfast every week and we'd chitchat, try out ideas on each other, talk about all kinds of issues. As I remember it, we were talking over breakfast about the growing problem of crime and drugs. There had been a lot of arrests [for marijuana] in the area, especially of children of prominent families, sons of doctors and lawyers. It wasn't an out-of-the-blue issue."

When Quayle received the Republican vice presidential nomination eleven years later, the *Los Angeles Times* was the only national newspaper to pick up on the story. In an article on August 18, 1988, reporters Sara Fritz and Henry Weinstein reported that Quayle had once favored the decriminalization of marijuana.

It was "spin control" time—the politician's art of presenting information to reporters so that they write stories with a favorable angle. Quayle's campaign managers trotted out none other than Mark Helmke to talk about Quayle's background. Helmke, identified as a campaign consultant, soft-pedaled the legalization story to reporters.

"It was mere speculation," he told the *Times*. "It was all very iffy. Something to think about and something to talk about over lunch."

The story about Quayle and legalization was known among Democratic campaign workers and reporters, according to Mark Steitz, then a senior issues adviser to Jesse Jackson. Steitz recalls hearing about the legalization story within a few weeks of Quayle's nomination. Steitz says he passed the information along to Jackson, who used it to deride Quayle while stumping for Dukakis. Still, no national reporters picked up on the story.

One reason is that the Dukakis campaign refused to raise the issue, probably out of a misguided and fatal unwillingness "to go negative" in the campaign. The other reason is that reporters who did know about the 1977 story were swayed by Helmke. But Helmke did not disown his original article. Helmke says that all the quotes in the *Sentinel* story are accurate, and that Quayle never complained that his views had been misconstrued. In 1988, Helmke portrayed Quayle's comments as lunchtime speculation, but in 1977 he thought they were news. Even if the future Vice President was largely keeping his views on decriminalization to himself in 1977, the subsequent evolution of his thinking was surely worth mentioning.

As far as I can tell, the only reporter from a paper with a national reputation to pick up the story during the campaign was Barbara Ross, who wrote a big piece on Quayle's legalization views for the New York *Daily News*. The only other national coverage that the *Sentinel* story has received since then was the recent *Time* cover story on the Vice President.

"Quayle starts from a conservative base but tries to keep the freedom to maneuver away from it," historian Garry Wills wrote. "In 1976 [sic] he suggested that marijuana be decriminalized, a view too radical to be repeated before his constituents."

During the 1988 campaign, reporters were far more interested in the story of Brett Kimberlin. A convicted drug smuggler serving time in federal prison, Kimberlin told reporters that he sold marijuana to Quayle 15 to 20 times in 1972 while Quayle was attending law school. The story, while not implausible, was impossible to verify. There were no eyewitnesses to the alleged transactions, and Quayle denied Kimberlin's claims.

The story boiled down to a credibility contest between a convicted drug smuggler and a multionaire Republican senator. A close call in the eyes of some, but the national press sided with Quayle. NBC News, National Public Radio, the *New York Times*, and Associated Press all held off on running the story, according to Norman Solomon's thorough report on the Kimberlin affair in San Francisco's *Bay Guardian*.

This journalistic judgment was generous to the Bush-Quayle campaign. As Solomon points out, considerations of fairness and credibility were ignored when all of these media organizations ran stories about the unfounded rumor that Dukakis had seen a psychiatrist.

Federal prison officials went to extraordinary lengths to silence Kimberlin. After scores of reporters inundated the federal prison in El Reno, Oklahoma with interview requests, Kimberlin scheduled a press conference four days before the election. J. Michael Quinlan, director of the federal Bureau of Prisons, canceled the event. According to *Legal Times*, such intervention in the operation of a local prison was highly unusual. Quinlan's actions followed close contact between prison officials and senior officials from the Bush-Quayle campaign and from the Reagan Justice Department. Kimberlin was then thrown in solitary confinement.

Kimberlin is now suing the Justice Department for violating his First Amendment rights. The lawsuit, being handled pro bono by the top-drawer Washington law firm Arnold & Porter, may shed light on how worried the Bush campaign was about Kimberlin—and why.

Aside from the mistreatment of Brett Kimberlin, there is a farcical element to this episode in the 1988 campaign. After all, the vast majority of the middle-aged reporters who were pursuing the Kimberlin story had themselves smoked pot. Few, if any of them, believed that this benign pastime was a matter of public concern or professional disrepute.

It is true that Quayle had denied using the drug. But even if it were true that he had smoked dope, Quayle would be guilty of getting high and fibbing about it—precisely the same harmless hypocrisy that scores of reporters were themselves engaged in. There may have been plenty of newsworthy reasons why Dan Quayle shouldn't have been elected Vice President in 1988, but getting high in law school 16 years earlier wasn't one of them.

Quayle, as a young aspiring politician looking to make a name for himself, ventured to criticize the foolishness of marijuana prohibition. His thoughts wound up in print, a rare philosophical curiosity that he has learned over the years to suppress. When a federal judge proposed legalization of drugs in December 1989, the Vice President snapped, "We aren't

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MONUMENTAL MARGARITAS.

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Sonic Youth, *left to right*, Steve Shelley, Lee Ranaldo, Kim Gordon, and Thurston Moore.

MICHAEL LAVINE

kool things

After nine years as underground megastars, Sonic Youth emerge blinking into the harsh mainstream light. So far they haven't noticed their shadow. By JIM GREER.

Maybe you should come over and fellate my guitar, Steve." Sonic Youth guitarist Thurston Moore is lying on his back on the foil-covered floor of a downtown Manhattan production studio. He wants drummer Steve Shelley to give his guitar a blowjob because the band are shooting a video. These guys know what plays well on MTV.

Actually, they were going to call the new album *Blowjob*, but settled instead on *Goo*. Which probably made their new record company, Geffen, happy until its executives saw the cover art: a drawing by renowned underground artist Raymond Pettibon. The drawing itself of a guy and a girl in a car presented no problems. But the accompanying text—which read in part, "Within a week we killed my parents and hit the road"—gave some Geffenites fits.

"They were still talking at sales meetings about an alternative cover, even though our A&R person knew quite well that there was no way we were going to do that," says bassist Kim Gordon.

After nine years of doing pretty much anything they want, Sonic Youth are finding the adjustment to corporate-label status somewhat difficult.

Not that they don't make every effort to understand the company's position: "I mean, all it takes is one kid to go kill his parents and have our record in his room," says Kim. "But still, the cover art isn't just decoration. It's important to us."

The band also had problems with the video they're shooting for the first single from *Goo*, "Kool Thing." Kim had wanted to wear a beret and carry an Uzi—anyway, she'd threatened to—but Geffen didn't find that idea particularly, um, appealing. She backed down on this one—after all, there are limits to this "no compromises" thing. Especially when you're dealing with potential medium-rotation MTV exposure.

In parody/homage to Andy Warhol's Factory, the floor and walls of the production studio are lined with aluminum foil. A couch is situated in one corner, an easy chair in another. Shiny star balloons hang from the ceiling, while stuffed toys, yellow plastic chains, dynamite, and pieces of fruit are strewn about the room. Purple and green lights refract at crazy angles off the foiled surfaces. It's a surreal vision, like a twisted Pee Wee's Playhouse. The perfect setting for Sonic Youth's twisted rock music.

With each take, the band gets progressively wilder. Thurston and fellow guitarist Lee Ranaldo thrash around the set like they've taken too much catnip, ripping up the foil, knocking over props, and upending furniture. At one point, Thurston, Kim, and Lee end up in a pile on the floor, wrapping each other in shredded foil, in the course of which Kim gets whacked on the nose with a guitar. Overall, an impressive simulacrum of actual performance.

"Kool Thing," the video, is clearly Kim's show, mainly because she's the lead singer on this one. She climbs up ladders to check out the camera angle before

"People should know an alternative to what's there. But are we still the alternative, being on a corporate label?"

shooting begins, and confers with the director, Tamra Davis, after every take. She seems completely at ease in front of the camera, lip-synching, dancing, gesturing. Watching her, watching the band, listening to the music, it's easy to forget that Sonic Youth are making their first real video. After nine years.

It was one of the most embarrassing moments of my entire life," says Kim of the video. "After we finished the inside stuff we went down to the federal courthouse and did some shots of me and two dancers standing outside. And there was one of those sandwich catering trucks parked right in front, for the policemen and the people who work in those buildings. It was like, the most embarrassing moment of my life, and it was catered."

Sitting in her Lower East Side apartment, Kim Gordon looks anything but nonplussed now. But to hear her tell it, her prowess before the camera is a put-on: "I was totally horrified at the prospect. It was a sink or swim thing, like being thrown in a pond."

Kim's the oldest member of Sonic Youth, most of whom are in their thirties. She's married to Thurston. Everyone in SY seems fascinated by celebrities, but none more than Kim. On their new record, there's a song about Karen Carpenter ("Tunic"), and on *Evol* Kim sings a song called "Starpower." She often wears a necklace of metallic stars. Kim was "raised as a visual artist" and went to a school that didn't have textbooks ("You just went out, made grass huts and spears, and studied Africa.").

Now, of course, with her band poised to enter the mainstream, Kim's in danger of losing her ironic distance from celebrity. How do you make fun of MTV videos when you've just made one yourself?

"Well, I don't think there's much danger of us becoming famous," she says. "We do hope we'll get to meet some more celebrities.

"Well, actually, I don't really want to meet them; I'd just like to get up really close and observe them. It just becomes this game. You get to read about them with some sort of continuity every week. It's almost like reading a cartoon strip, but it's real people. Our society puts so much importance on celebrities. It's the ultimate success, as well as a national preoccupation."

Kim: "I don't think there's much danger of us becoming famous. We do hope we'll get to meet some more celebrities."

Although they're being treated as a new band by their record company, Sonic Youth have quite a history. They began in 1981, with Thurston, Kim, Lee, and drummer Richard Edson, who was later replaced by Bob Bert, who was in turn replaced by Steve Shelley. They put out a couple of records on a tiny independent label, Neutral, then moved to slightly less tiny Homestead Records in 1985, where they recorded *Bad Moon Rising* and started attracting serious attention. In 1986, they put out *Evol* on SST Records and, in 1987, *Sister*, also on SST. 1988 saw the release of the double record set *Daydream Nation* on Blast First/Enigma, which topped many critics polls and brought widespread recognition—including the deal with Geffen—that the band's innovative sound was more than a novelty.

For the uninitiated, a Sonic Youth performance can sound and feel a lot like a tornado being pulled through one ear and out the other. Some people don't like this, but an increasing number do.

The most distinctive features of their sound derives from the nonstandard tuning Thurston and Lee use on their guitars. The result is dissonant—the intervals they use simply don't sound "right" to ears bred on standard Western pop—as well as beautiful. Clanging overtones fill the air with sounds and textures that aren't really "there." The effect can be alternately symphonic or simply mind-bendingly noisy. An acquired taste, to be sure, but an easily acquired one.

Especially since the band has refined their technique to the point where you often don't even notice the "weird tuning thing." Back in the early days, SY would build a song around a particular tuning, whereas now creative tuning is less an end than a very effective means. Sonic Youth have developed from an art-based guitar-rock band to a guitar-based art-rock band.

In doing so they represent probably the last of a particular breed of bands who, starting in the early 80s, came out of the underground to achieve success in the mainstream arena. The Replacements, Hüsker Dü, even R.E.M. all grew out of an extensive network of underground bands, clubs, and record labels that sprouted in the wake of the punk explosion of the mid to late 70s. That network has shrunk now to the point of virtual inviability. Every major label now has an "alternative

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PAT BLASHILL

Kim Gordon lets her hair down.

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FIDEL'S TALE

If anyone really knows Fidel Castro, it may be Nobel laureate GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ, a close friend of the Cuban dictator whose "zeal for conversation," Marquez writes, may stem from "an organic need to hold at all costs to the guiding thread of truth amid the hallucinatory mirages of power."

Speaking of a foreign visitor who had accompanied him around Cuba for a week, Fidel Castro said, "How that man can talk—he talks even more than I do!" It is enough to know Fidel Castro just a little to realize this was an exaggeration of his, and one of the biggest, because it is impossible to find anyone more addicted than he to the habit of conversation.

His devotion to the word is almost magical. At the beginning of the revolution, hardly a week after his triumphal entry into Havana, he spoke on television for seven hours without respite. It must be a world record. During the first few hours, the people of Havana, not yet familiar with the hypnotic power of that voice, sat down to listen in the traditional way, but as time passed they went back to their daily routine, with one ear to their affairs and the other to the speech.

I had arrived the day before with a group of journalists from Caracas, and we started listening to the speech in our hotel rooms. Without a pause we continued listening in the elevator, in the taxi that took us to the business districts, on the café terraces blooming with flowers, in the freezing-cold bars, and even walking down the streets where radios were going full-blast through open windows. By evening we had carried out our day's schedule without missing a word.

Two things caught the attention of those of us hearing Fidel Castro for the first time. One was his tremendous power to seduce his listeners, the other was the fragility of his voice. It was a hoarse voice which at times was reduced to a breathless whisper. A doctor, on hearing the hoarseness, concluded that even without the marathon speeches that seemed to flow as long as the Amazon River, Fidel Castro was doomed to lose his voice within five years. Shortly afterward, in August 1962, this prognosis seemed to have its first alarming confirmation, when he was left mute after making a speech announcing the nationalization of U.S. companies. But it was a transitory setback which did not recur; 28 years have passed since then, Fidel has just turned 63, and his voice sounds just as uncertain as ever—but it continues to be his most useful and irresistible instrument in the subtle craft of the spoken word.

Three hours, for him, are a good average for an ordinary conversation; and three hours at a time, the days speed by him. As he is not an academic leader entrenched in his offices but rather likes to seek out problems wherever they may be, he can be seen in his discreet car—without the roar of accompanying motorcycles—slipping along the deserted avenues of Havana or on some out-of-the-way road at any time, even in the predawn hours. All this has given rise to the legend that he is a drifting loner, a disorganized and unconventional insomniac who may turn up for a visit at any hour and keep his host awake until dawn.

A long time ago he said, "As important as learning to work is learning to rest." But his methods of rest seem too original, and some do not exclude conversation. Once he left an intense work session at nearly midnight with visible signs of exhaustion, and returned in the predawn hours fully recovered after swimming for a couple of hours. Private parties run counter to his character, as he is one of the rare Cubans who neither sings nor dances, and the very few he does attend change in nature when he arrives. Perhaps he is not aware of the power imposed by his presence, which seems to immediately fill all the space, although he is not so tall nor so corpulent as he appears at first glance. I have seen the most self-assured people lose their poise in his presence—pushing their composure to the limit or overdoing their air of confidence—without even imagining that he is as intimidated as they are and has to make an initial effort so that they do not notice it. I have always believed that the plural he often uses when speaking of his own acts is not so majestic as it seems, but rather a poetic license to conceal his shyness.

The fact is that the dancing is interrupted, the music stops, the dinner is put off, and the crowd gathers around him to join in the conversation, which begins immediately. He can remain like that for any length of time, standing up, without drinking or eating anything. Sometimes, before going to bed, he knocks very late at the door of a close friend, where he shows up unannounced, and says he's staying only five minutes. He says it with such sincerity that he does not even take a seat. But little by little he gets stimulated again by the new conversation, and after a while he collapses into an easy chair and stretches out his legs, saying, "I feel like a new man." That is how it is: Weary of talking, he rests by talking.

Fidel once said, "In my next reincarnation I want to be a writer." In fact, he writes well and he likes doing it, even in a moving car, in the notebooks he always has at hand for writing down whatever comes to mind, even personal letters. They are notebooks of ordinary paper bound in blue plastic, which over the years have been stored countlessly in his private files. His handwriting, at first glance, looks as simple as a schoolboy's, but his method of writing is like that of a professional. He corrects a phrase several times, crosses it out, tries it again in the margins, and it is not unusual for him to search for a word for days, consulting dictionaries, asking around, until it comes out to his liking.

In the 1970s he fell into the habit of writing out his speeches, so slowly and with such meticulousness that they resembled clockwork. But this same virtue spoiled them. Fidel's personality seemed to change when he read them. The tone was different, the style, even the quality of the voice. In immense Revolution Square, before half a million people, he several times felt himself suffocating in the straitjacket of the written word, and every chance he got he departed from the text. On other occasions he found that one of his typists had made an error, and rather than correcting it as he went along he would stop speaking and make the change with a ballpoint pen, taking his time. He was never satisfied. Despite his efforts to liven them up, and despite the fact that he did succeed in many cases, those captive speeches left him frustrated. They said everything he wanted to say, and perhaps they said it better, but they left out the greatest stimulus of his life, which is the excitement of risk.

Improvisation, then, seems to be his perfect ecological medium, although he always has to overcome an initial inhibition which few people know about but which he does not deny. In a note he sent me a few years ago asking me to participate in some public ceremony, he said, "Try for once to get over your stage fright, as I myself must do so often." Only in some very special cases does he use a card with some notes, which he unceremoniously takes out of his pocket before starting and holds within view. He always begins in a nearly inaudible voice, actually hesitant, pushing forward in the fog on an uncertain course, but seizing upon any glimmer to gain ground inch by inch, until he lashes out with something like a great paw and grabs hold of an audience. Then a give-and-take is established between him and the crowd which excites them both and creates between them a kind of dialectical complicity; in this unbearable tension lies the essence of his elation. It is inspiration: the irresistable and dazzling state of grace, which is denied only by those who have not had the glory of experiencing it.

Public events used to begin whenever Fidel happened to arrive, which was as improbable as the rain. For some years now he has been arriving at the exact minute, and the duration of his speech depends on the mood of the audience. But the infinite speeches of the early years belong to a past now confused with legend, because the many things the people had to understand in the beginning have now been more than explained, and Fidel's style itself has become more compact after so many sessions of oratorical pedagogy. He has never been heard to repeat any of the papier-mâché slogans of

ADRIAN DeLUCCA

communist scholasticism, nor make any use at all of the system's ritual dialectic, a fossil language which long ago lost contact with reality, and which goes hand in glove with a laudatory and commemorative press that seems to function to conceal rather than to make known. He is an antidogmatist par excellence, whose creative imagination lies hovering over the abysses of heresy. He rarely quotes the phrases of others, neither in conversation nor on the rostrum, except those of José Martí, who is his author of choice. He knows the 28 volumes of his work thoroughly, and has had the talent to incorporate his ideas into the bloodstream of a Marxist revolution. But the essence of his own thought may lie in the certainty that doing mass work is fundamentally being concerned with individuals.

This could explain his absolute confidence in direct contact. Even the most difficult speeches seem to be casual talks, like those he held with students in the courtyards of the university at the beginning of the revolution. In fact, especially outside Havana, it is not unusual for someone to call out to him from the crowd at a public meeting and for a shouted dialogue to begin. He has a language for every occasion and a different form of persuasion depending on his different interlocutors—be they workers, farmers, students, scientists, politicians, writers, or foreign visitors. He can put himself on the level of each one and has vast and varied information that allows him to move easily in any medium. But his personality is so complex and unpredictable that any one of them can form a different impression of him in the same encounter.

One thing is certain: Wherever he may be, however and with whomever, Fidel Castro is there to win. I do not think anyone in this world could be a worse loser. His attitude in the face of defeat, even in the slightest acts of daily life, seems to obey a private logic: He does not even admit it, and he does not have a moment of peace so long as he does not manage to invert the terms and turn it into a victory. But whatever it may be, and wherever, everything happens within the ambit of an inexhaustible conversation.

The subject can be anything, according to the interest of the audience, but the opposite often occurs. It is he who takes a single subject to all his audiences. This tends to happen in the periods in which he is exploring an idea which is bothering him, and no one can be more obsessive than he when he has set out to get to the bottom of something. There is no project, colossal or millimetric, which he does not undertake with a fierce passion. And especially if he has to face adversity. Never than at such times does he look better, seem to be in a better mood or in higher spirits. Someone who knows him well once said to him, "Things must be going very badly, because you are radiant."

A few years ago, a foreign visitor, upon meeting him for the first time, said to me, "Fidel is getting old, last night he reiterated the same subject seven times." I explained to him that these nearly manic reiterations are one of his ways of working. The subject of Latin America's foreign debt, for example, surfaced in his conversations for the first time a couple of years ago, and had been developing, branching out, growing more profound, until it became something very much like a recurrent nightmare. The first thing he said, like a simple arithmetical conclusion, was that the debt was unpayable. Little by little, during three trips I made to Havana that year, I got to know his country's economy, its political and social impact, its decisive influence on international relations, its providential importance for a unitary Latin American policy. Finally, he convoked a massive congress of experts in Havana and gave a speech in which he left none of the questions of his preceding conversation unanswered. By then he had a totalizing vision which only the passage of time will bear out.

It seems to me that Fidel's most unusual virtue as a politician is this faculty of discerning the evolution of a matter all the way to its remote conclusions. As if he could see the projecting mass of an iceberg at the same time as the seven-eighths of it underwater. But this faculty does not function by illumination, but rather as a result of an arduous and tenacious reasoning. An assiduous interlocutor could discover the first embryo of an idea and follow its development over many months through Fidel's persistent conversation, until he finally makes it public in its final form, as happened with the foreign debt. But then, once the subject is exhausted, it is as though a vital cycle had been completed; he files it away forever.

Such a verbal mill requires, of course, the aid of an incessant flow of information, well-chewed and digested. His supreme aid is his memory, and he uses it to the point of abuse to sustain speeches and private conversations with overwhelming reasoning and arithmetic operations of incredible speed. His information accumulation begins when he wakes up. He breakfasts with no less than 200 pages of news from all over the world. During the day, despite his tireless mobility, people pursue him everywhere with urgent information. He himself calculates that every day he has to read some fifty documents. To this must be added the reports of his official services and of his visitors, and everything that could be of interest to his infinite curiosity. Any exaggeration in this sense would be barely approximate, even in circumstances as extreme as a trip in an airplane. He prefers not to fly, and does so only when there is no alternative. He is a bad passenger because of his anxiety to know it all: He neither sleeps nor reads, he hardly eats, he asks the crew for navigation maps every time he has some doubt, he makes them explain why this route is being taken and not this other one, why the noise of the turbines is changing, why the plane is bouncing in spite of the good weather. The replies, of course, must be correct, as he can discover the slightest inconsistency in a casual phrase.

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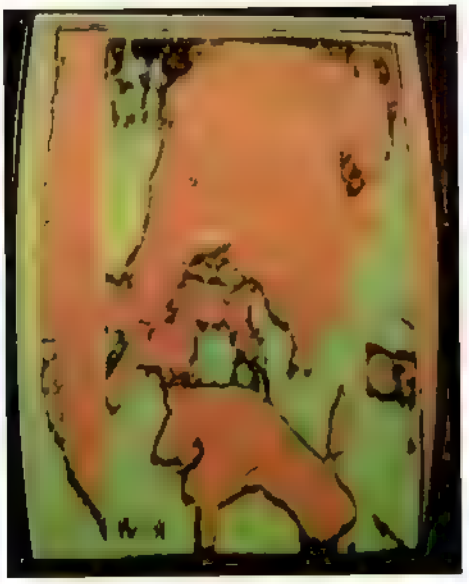
My best friend Scott
came home last night and
gave me this great mix.
He works a thousand miles
away on Wall St. And I'm
still here on Elm Street.
Literally. We've known
each other since 7th grade.
He taped a lot of songs
that were on the radio
last summer when we drove
cross-country.
We met these great girls
from San Diego.
They were into this band
from Australia. Scott put
a few of their songs
on the flip side.
What really cracked me up was
he mixed in some
old stuff from that
blues-guitar band
we used to go see
up the road.
And I like the
new garage band
sound he has
on the end.
Anyway, Scott
is still my
best friend.
I miss him.
This tape
makes me
feel close.
Tonight I'm
gonna listen
to it again with
Jeannie. She's my fiancée.
She's this great girl I met
from San Diego.
FUJI
RESISTS HEAT AND VIBRATION FOR SUPERIOR SOUND QUALITY.
FR-II x PRO
90
TO JEFF
FUJI
A new way of seeing things.



ADRIAN DELUCCA

FIDEL'S TALE

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Another vital source of information, of course, is books. Perhaps the aspect of Fidel Castro's personality least in keeping with the image created by his adversaries is that of being a voracious reader. No one can explain how he finds the time or what methods he uses to read so much and so quickly, although he insists that there is nothing special about it. In his cars, from the prehistoric Oldsmobile and successive Soviet Zils to the current Mercedes, there has always been a light for reading at night. Many times he has gone away with a book in the predawn hours, and commented on it the following morning. He reads English, but does not speak it. In any case he prefers to read in Spanish, and at any hour is ready to read any piece of paper with letters on it that may fall into his hands. When he needs some very recent book which has not yet been translated, he has his own translation made in the interim. A doctor friend sent him, as a courtesy, his treatise on orthopedics which had just been published, without of course any pretension that he read it, but a week later the doctor received a letter from him with a long list of observations. He is an habitual reader of economic and historical subjects. When he read the memoirs of Lee Iacocca, he discovered several such incredible errors that he sent to New York for the English version to compare with the Spanish. Indeed, the translator had once again confused the meaning of the word billion in the two languages. He is a good reader of literature, and follows it closely. I have on my conscience having initiated him in the addiction to quick-consumption best-sellers, and now of keeping him up to date as an antidote to official documents.

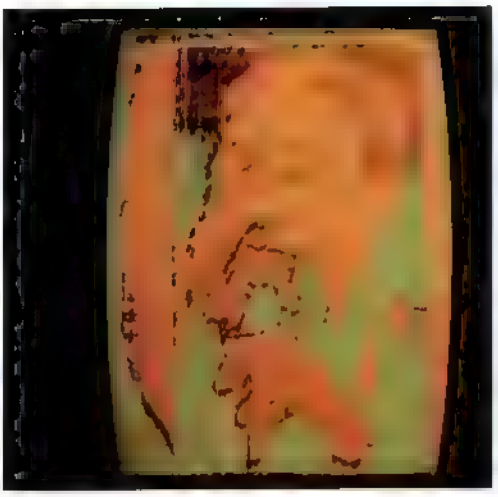
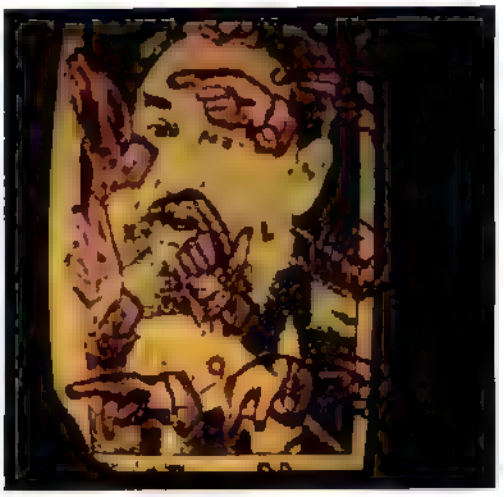
Still, his immediate and most fruitful source of information continues to be conversation. He has the habit of quick interrogations which resemble a *matrushka*, the Russian doll from whose interior a similar, smaller one emerges, then another one, until the smallest one possible: successive questions that he asks in instantaneous bursts until he discovers the why of the why of the final why. It is difficult for his interlocutor to not feel subjected to an inquisitorial examination. When a visitor from Latin America gave him a hasty statistic on the increasing consumption of his compatriots, he did his mental calculations and said, "How strange, each one eats four pounds of rice a day." With time, you learn that his called him about some casual matter. Fidel told me afterwards: "I took advantage of the fact that we both had time, to ask him for some information that did not come in the cables about the coffee situation in Colombia."

Everyone who goes to Cuba would like to see Fidel Castro, in any way possible, although there are many who dream of seeing him in private. Especially the foreign journalists, who do not consider their work finished so long as they do not carry away the trophy of an interview with him. I think that he would oblige them all if it were not for the physical impossibility. At this moment there are some 300 formal requests awaiting procedures that could be infinite. There is always a journalist waiting in an Havana hotel, after having appealed to all kinds of sponsors to see him. Some wait for months. They get indignant about not knowing who to turn to, because no one knows for sure what the right steps are for getting to him. The truth is that there are none. It is not unusual for some lucky journalist to ask him a casual question in the course of a public appearance and for a dialogue to end in an interview several hours long on every conceivable subject. He takes a long time over each one, ventures out on the least expected, difficult terrain, without ever being careless of precision, knowing that a single ill-used word can cause irreparable damage. In his very few formal interviews, he tends to grant the time requested, although he himself later prolongs it with an unpredictable elasticity, stimulated by the dynamics of the dialogue. Only in very special cases does he ask to see the questions beforehand. He has never refused to answer any question, provocative though it may be, nor has he ever lost his patience. Sometimes the two hours planned turn into four, and nearly always into six. Or seventeen, as was the case in the interview with Gianni Mina for Italian television, which is one of the longest he has granted, and also one of the most complete.

Ultimately, very few interviews please him, least of all the written transcripts, which in the interests of space tend to sacrifice the exactitude and the nuances particular to his personal style. He thinks that the television interviews end up unnatural because of the inevitable fragmentation, and it seems to him unjust to have given up to five hours of his life for a seven-minute program. But what is most regrettable, for both Fidel and his listeners, is that even the best journalists, especially the Europeans, do not have the curiosity to square their questions with reality. They aspire to the trophy with questions written according to the political obsessions and cultural prejudices of their own countries, without taking the trouble to find out for themselves what today's Cuba is really like, what the dreams and real frustrations of its people are: the truth of their lives. In this way they deprive the Cuban man in the street of an opportunity to talk to the world, and they deny themselves the professional achievement of questioning Fidel Castro, not about European suppositions, which are so distant, but about the anxieties of his own people.

This is the Fidel Castro I believe I know, after uncountable hours of conversations, through which the phantom of politics does not often pass: a man of austere ways and insatiable illusions, with an old-fashioned formal education, of cautious words and simple manners, and incapable of conceiving any idea which is not out of the ordinary.

Listening to Fidel Castro in so many and diverse circumstances, I have asked myself many times if his zeal for conversation does not obey an

organic need to hold at all costs to the guiding thread of truth amid the hallucinatory mirages of power. I have asked myself this over the course of many dialogues, public and private, but especially as regards the most difficult and fruitless dialogues with those who, in his presence, lose their naturalness and aplomb and speak to him in theoretical formulas that have nothing to do with reality. Or with those who whisk the truth out of his sight so as not to give him more reasons for concern than he already has. He knows it. To one official who did that to him he said, "You hide truths from me so as not to trouble me, but when at last I discover them I will die from the effects of facing so many truths that you will have failed to tell me." The most serious, however, are the truths they hide from him to conceal shortcomings, because along with the enormous achievements that sustain the revolution—the political, scientific, athletic, and cultural achievements—there is a colossal bureaucratic incompetence which affects nearly every order of daily life, and most particularly domestic happiness, and which has obligated Fidel Castro himself, nearly 30 years after victory, to personally deal with such extraordinary matters as the making of bread and the distribution of beer.

Everything is different, on the other hand, when he talks to the people in the street. The conversation then recovers the expressiveness and crude frankness of real affection. Of his various civilian and military names, only one is left to him then: Fidel. They surround him without risks, they use the familiar *tu* form of address with him, they argue with him, they contradict him, they make demands of him—with a channel of immediate transmission through which the truth flows in torrents. It is then, rather than in privacy, that the rare human being shielded from sight by the brilliance of his own image is discovered. This is the Fidel Castro I believe I know, after uncountable hours of conversations, through which the phantom of politics does not often pass: a man of austere ways and insatiable illusions, with an old-fashioned formal education, of cautious words and simple manners, and incapable of conceiving any idea which is not out of the ordinary. He dreams that his scientists will find the cure for cancer, and has created a world power foreign policy on an island without fresh water 84 times smaller than its principal enemy. Such is the discretion with which he protects his privacy that his intimate life has ended up being the most impenetrable enigma of his legend. He has the nearly mystical conviction that the greatest achievement of the human being is the proper formation of conscience, and that moral incentives, rather than material ones, are capable of changing the world and moving history forward. I think he is one of the greatest idealists of our time and that this, perhaps, may be his greatest virtue, although it has also been his greatest danger.

Many times I have seen him arrive at my house very late at night, still trailing the last scraps of a limitless day. Many times I have asked him how things were going, and more than once he answered me: "Very well, we have all the reservoirs full." I have seen him open the refrigerator to eat a piece of cheese, which was perhaps the first thing he had eaten since breakfast; I have seen him telephone a friend in Mexico to ask her for the recipe for a dish he had liked, and I have seen him copy it down leaning against the counter, among the still unwashed pots and pans from dinner, while someone on television sang the old song, "Life Is an Express Train That Travels Thousands of Leagues." I have heard him, in his few moments of nostalgia, evoke the pastoral dawns of his rural childhood, the sweetheart of his youth who left, the things he could have done differently to win from life. One night, while he was eating vanilla ice cream in slow little spoonfuls, I saw him overwhelmed by the weight of the destinies of so many people, so removed from himself, that for an instant he seemed different to me from the man he had always been. Then I asked him what he would most like to do in this world, and he immediately answered: "Hang around on some street corner."

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Disaster
AIRWALK
TEES

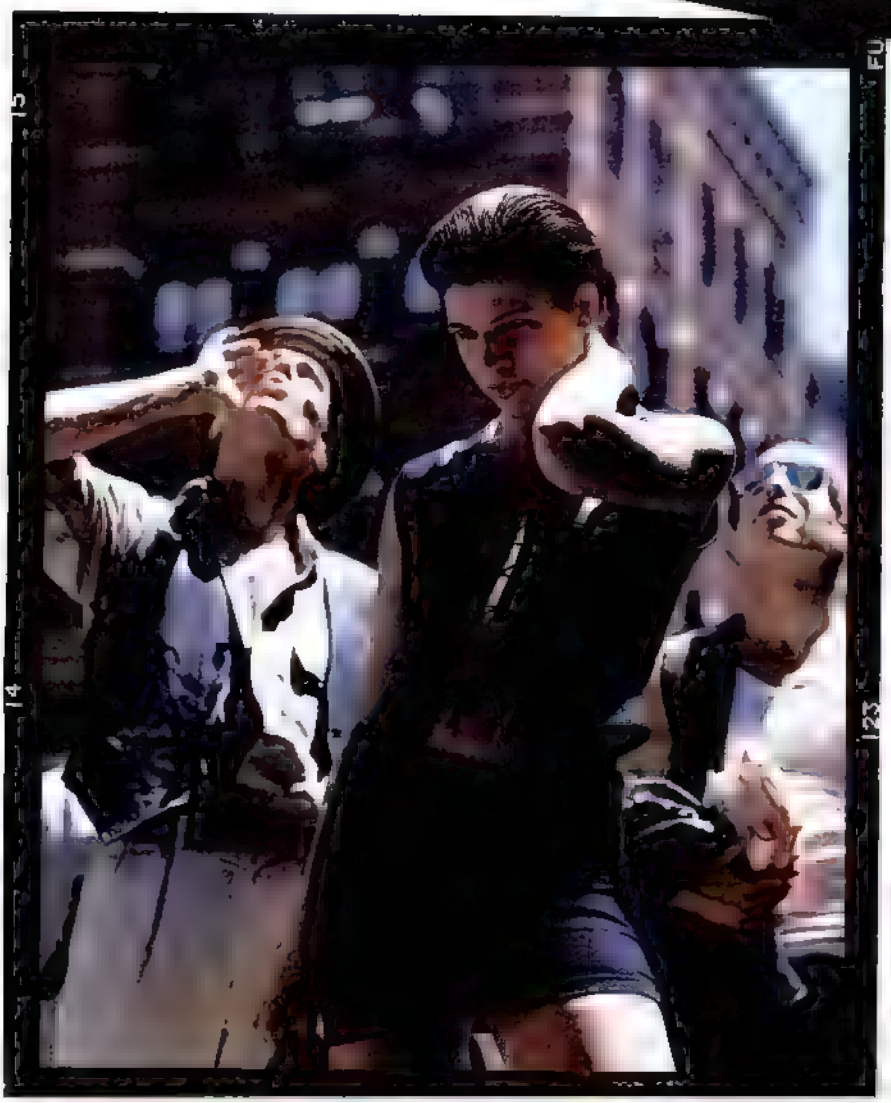
I am my TV

In my video there are 3 guys to every girl.

We party a lot . . .

Upper left and right, my lace antique shirts from **Stella Dallas,** his hats from **Benetton,** and the PJ's are from **Antique Boutique Below** his sweater is by **Sisley** and my body suit is from **Ici La Fille.**

I am my TV



I gather my posse . . .

and take it to the streets—

But I gather no moss.

Above left, he wears a khaki work shirt by **GuessT** and twill pants from **The Gap**. I'm wearing my **Agnes B.** leather vest with another lycra mini from **French Connection**. On my left, he wears his **Levi's** and **Nanos** T-shirt with an **Antique Boutique** vest. **Left** he wears a trench from **Agnes B.** over his **Levi's**. I'm in another outfit from **Isaia**, he's still wearing his hat from **Benetton** and, **far right** he's wearing **Antique Boutique** gear with a **Benetton** coat over the shoulder.

Opposite page, I'm wearing an **Isaia** black cotton lycra skirt, **Sisley** red blazer and **Agnes B.** leather vest. They wear **left,** a khaki work shirt from **GuessT,** twill pants from **The Gap** and **right,** a leather vest from **Antique Boutique** and **Levi's** jeans.

photograph by Butch Belair
styled by Lynn Williams

CANAL 6-1212

CONCRETE BLONDE'S AMBITION

Concrete Blonde leave a little blood on the tracks, says AMY LINDEN.

Ask Johnette Napolitano what she misses most about the United States and she answers immediately, "Mexican food," and lets go of a huge laugh. Johnette laughs as though she were being Heimliched. Johnette laughs a lot, at least she did while we were speaking. It's not what you would expect considering her onstage persona as lead singer of the group Concrete Blonde: head-to-toe black (she's always worn it), tattoos scattered about her body, Vampira of Sunset Boulevard make up—"They call me Goth in England!" she shrugs. Add to that list of what becomes a doom queen most the latest Concrete Blonde album, *Bloodletting*. It comes complete with stark graphics depicting roses dripping blood and a generally bummed-out oeuvre. A barrel of yuks is the last thing you'd figure she'd be. Go figure.

The band is beginning a U.S. tour. They have always been semilegendary in the Southern California area, yet Johnette is clearly not at ease. "I haven't been in this country in six months and here I am in a mall." The interview is taking place in the band's RV, which is parked in the scenic MarVista mall in Long Beach. She laughs again, then leans her chin on her hand. "I'm kinda depressed about it. I don't really wanna be here, to tell you the truth."

Johnette is every girl who lent you her eyeliner in the bathroom at a Germs show. She's a girl who survived the morass of the punk scene, albeit with her nylons ripped and a list of scumbag boyfriends that stretches around the block ("I often think I should have 'lie to me' tattooed on my forehead," she smirks). Johnette is the type of girl other girls can open up to and guys are forced to respect. She's one of those women who takes care of business because she thinks that's what women have to do, thank you, and she's clearly in control. Johnette is a tough cookie who right now would love to find true love, a record company that doesn't want to fuck her over, and a functional Stairmaster. If she lived in New York, she'd probably be a good friend of mine.

These days Johnette is living the life of an expatriate over in the U.K., and what she really misses in her safe European home (besides the aforementioned Mex chow) is her family. As I start babbling on about my young'un, Johnette brightens. She begins dragging class photos of her nieces out of her wallet. We discuss which is more painful: childbirth or getting a tattoo (childbirth wins hands down). "What I want to get tattooed on my back are a lot more roses and 'Mom.' Wouldn't that be cool? Of course, that still wouldn't please my mother. She'd go, 'You didn't call me on my birthday' and I'd go, 'Mom! Look, you're on my back! Get off my back, Ma!' " She laughs that shotgun of a laugh again.

People have always thought Johnette is a little nuts. No doubt because she's loud, caustic at times, smart, and independent. It's the kiss of death for women. In Europe, Johnette has found her soul and cleared her head. It must be a lot to give up your home (no matter how fucked up it is), I remark. "Not really," she answers, "because, I feel like it's a hell of a good move to go over there and just start over. This country is bugging me. I feel real confused as to what an American is."

Johnette's childhood reads like an American pop-culture storybook. She was born in Hollywood where her dad cleaned the pools of the stars. When she was a child Bela Lugosi baby-sat for her. The family moved to the relative calm of the Valley when Johnette was a toddler. She learned how to play the guitar from one of those *Play Guitar with the Ventures* books, and as soon as she was old enough, she started drifting to the big city. "I had an aunt who used to be a dancer on *Shindig* and was engaged to Mickey Dolenz. She knew Tom Jones. She was really cool, man. She lived in Hollywood, and whenever I would hang out with her, I just got the sense that something was going on." What was going on eventually spurred Johnette and cofounder/guitarist James Mankey to form Concrete Blonde (the name was given to them by ex-labelmate Michael Stipe).

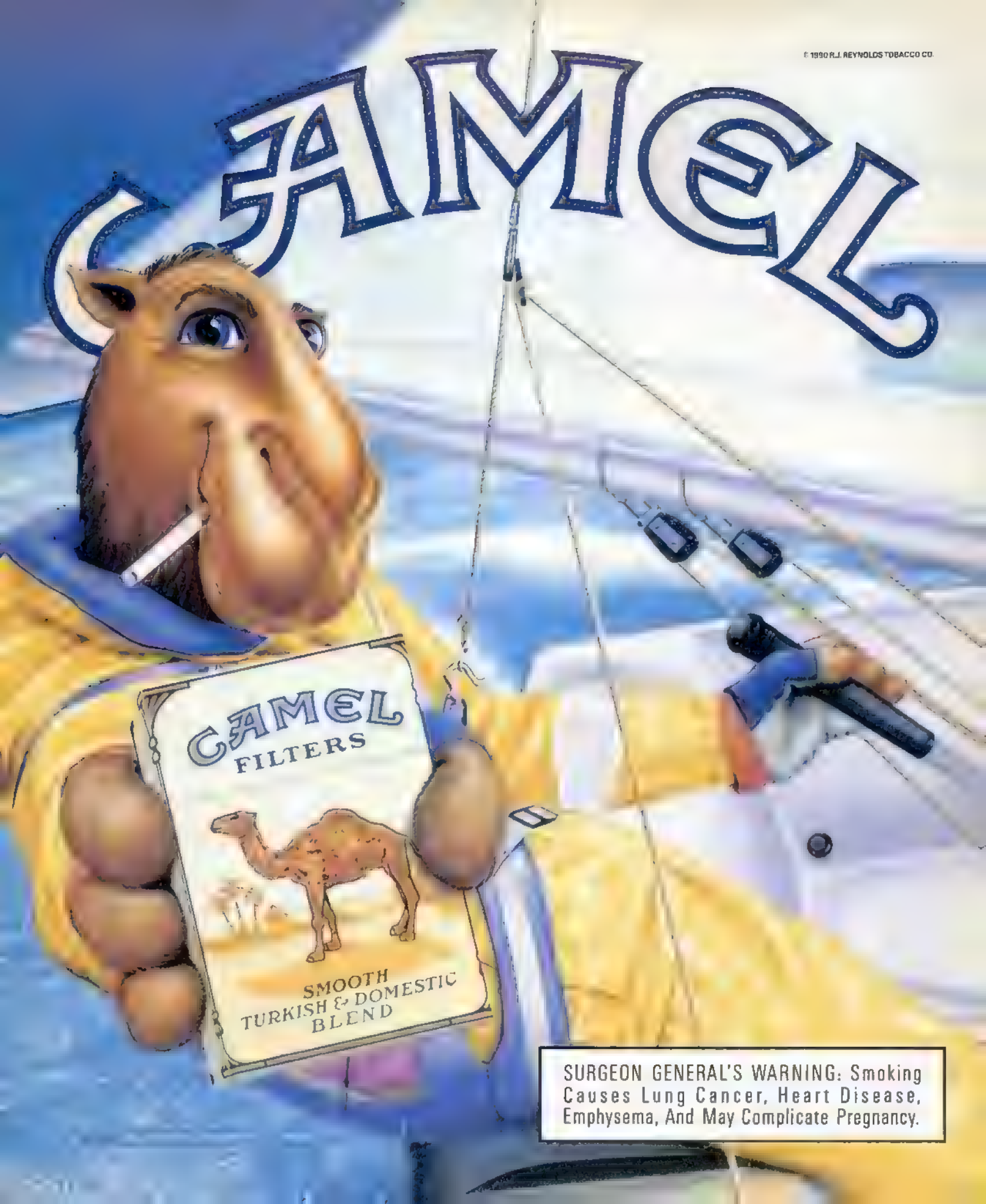
The three faces of Blonde *(l-r)*: James Mankey, Paul Thompson, and Johnette Napolitano. *Below*, Johnette ponders the pleasures of the Stairmaster.

Concrete Blonde rose out of the Los Angeles club scene, hitting their stride smack in between the first great wave of Angeleno bands (X, the Go-Go's, Wall of Voodoo) and the next crop (Guns N' Roses, ad nauseam). But back then, the band, with its blending of string-bending riffs and literate emotionality, never quite fit in. "People ask me, 'What do you think of L.A.?' L.A. is not Guns N' Roses. L.A. is the Cramps, the Go-Go's. I'm an old fart, I'm 32 years old," Johnette grins, "but there was more diversity then. What a great time that was!" We realize that we are starting to sound like someone's parents, going on about the good old days, and start cracking up.

Concrete Blonde released two records; the second, *Free*, spawned the quasi-hit "God Is a Bullet." That single, and the fact that the then four-piece band played loud, had a bunch of tattoos, and "hair to there," got them pegged as an L.A. band: i.e., heavy metal. Johnette nipped that in the bud, bringing the group back to its original three pieces (adding ex-Roxy Music drummer Paul Thompson) and taking up the bass again. *Bloodletting* is a dark, almost opiated, journey. I mention that there is a lot of—dare one say—angst underneath the grooves. Johnette nods her head. "Oh, yeah. It was pretty miserable. It's not a happy little disc. We had a string of bad luck and [*Bloodletting*] was the tail end of it. A particularly bad relationship. It had never happened to me until I was 29 years old. I had a hard time getting over it. So, it's not a happy record, but I could do two things. I could make a self-indulgent record, which is what this is, or I could lock up all these songs in a closet and do something that wasn't sincere. This will never happen again, this record."

Just then Paul Thompson comes into the femme sanctum. Seems that there is a health club (after all, this is a mall in Southern California) with a Stairmaster just a few shops down. There are a few hours before they go on and Johnette is itching to sweat. The news makes her ecstatic. Tomorrow she will hook up with her family; her endorphins are about to go into overdrive. All she needs now is to grab a burrito to go.

Concrete Blonde rose out of the Los Angeles club scene, hitting their stride smack in between the first great wave of Angeleno bands (X, the Go-Go's, Wall of Voodoo) and the next crop (Guns N' Roses, ad nauseam).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TURKISH & DOMESTIC
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SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.

gonna Kick tomorrow

Jane's Addiction spawned their own cult of sexual freedom and ended up sticking a fat monkey on our backs. They got us jonesin' so hard we'd slog through a storm of Jesse Helms's flunkies in order to get straight.

DEAN KUIPERS gets his fix in L.A.

"Stop the car." As the sun plops into the Pacific off Venice Beach, California, the four of us are sitting in a rented car at the corner of Rose and Main. The corner is deserted. Perry Farrell, singer and overjuiced conceptualist behind Jane's Addiction, is staring up at the sky.

"You'll need a 40-foot extension ladder to even get near that thing," murmurs Mark, one half of Perry's hired film crew.

"And I'll need more powerful lights for the camera," adds Aaron, the other half of the movie team.

Perry wants this caper for The Movie. Towering above us, on the prow of a spanking new hipster cafe, lurks a two-story mutant clown cast in fiberglass. The horror has the skirt-clad body of a Dallas Cowboy cheerleader but the head of a male clown, its face twisted in a demented grin. Straight out of *The Attack of the Killer Clowns*. The thing holds a waiter's tray. Its leg kicks absently in the moonlight.

"I'm going to need rope and maybe some kind of harness," says Perry to himself. Then, to the clown: "You are going *down*, motherfucker. I don't want people to come here and think that the artists in my community are gonna stand for this."

As far as freedom of expression and the First Amendment are concerned, it's been a frustrating year for Jane's Addiction. For Perry, it's almost enough to make him go into filmmaking full time—where nudity is encouraged and drugs make great scripts.

He lays out the plan: Position lights so that Perry will show up on hand-held video as he scales the thing, 25 feet in the air. Then, when the coast is clear, dash around the corner with a ladder, hit the lights, clamber up and paint "KILL ME" across its breasts. Then jump down and avoid the cops.

"I need more lights first," repeats Aaron.

"Okay. It's in the budget," assures Perry. Silence. Then he adds: "Hey, you guys got a bottle of rubber cement? 'Cause if you do, I'm gonna set that clown's head on fire."

We are all in Perry Farrell's movie. He has been rewriting it and funding it and getting his head stuck in it for a long time—perhaps since he fled Brooklyn and his family on a westbound jet 15 years ago to become a homeless runaway; a nervous kid who slept on the beach at Santa Monica. Tattered pages of poetry and snatches of dialogue from actual brain-kiss conversations have never really congealed into a decent script for his short feature film, but to Perry these dislocated scenes are more real than the fictional plots we saw in Beatles movies. Mark and Aaron, the film crew, don't know exactly what Perry has in mind, but all three of them have gone into training.

Jane's Addiction is the future of Los Angeles, scrawled onto a cryptic, 4-D road warrior soulmap that no one can read yet. But a lot of you are already guided by their map. Their latest LP, *Ritual de lo Habitual*, building on 1988's *Nothing's Shocking*, hits like the nighttime shrieking of a boy who suddenly knows the savage power of his own desire and his own poetry. Jane's Addiction has swallowed a world of shit to make us feel Art—and make it meaningful again.

Jane's Addiction is Perry's concept. But it's not *his* band. Perry's poetry and style are simply the vehicle that best fit the hulking visual feel of Jane's' powerplant: bassist Eric Avery, drummer Stephen Perkins, and anti-blues wah wah magician Dave Navarro. Once the happy subjects of an industry bidding war that Warner Bros. eventually won, these L.A. surfers are frolicking like pigs in zen. With *Ritual*, they've finally wrought their eccentric amalgam of Duke Ellington soul, abstract poetry, and introspection into a rock'n'roll sledgehammer.

Searching among the stubby palms and sand-choked grass, Perry, Mark, Aaron, and I cruise the northern end of the boardwalk at Venice. We've just come from seeing a potential studio for The Movie, located by a couple of professional film-location men. Warner Bros., it seems, has put up a decent budget for Perry to work with—enough to hire people to do this kind of work.

The boys are making their daily visit to a homeless friend, a guy who peddles stuff he finds in the street. Some of the local men and women recognize the three boys and crinkle their incredible brown-leather faces into a quick smile. A hundred yards away the breakers thud on the beach with a soft implosion. We spend an hour chattering with homeless folks up and down the boardwalk, most of them huddled in jackets under the blazing sun, but we don't find the old man.

Perry and Mark are pawing through a tableful of crystals for some stones to place in their jewelry when suddenly Perry jumps. "Cool! This guy's got to be in my movie," he says, pointing down the beach.

A tall Rastafarian rolls toward us on spanking new Rollerblades, clad in flowing, brilliant white togs and a tall white turban. He's wearing hockey shinpads and has a white Stratocaster slung around his neck painted with concentric red circles and emblazoned with an Alice Cooper bumper sticker. As he rolls closer to the table, his tweety-bird amp is emitting a haunting tune that lilts somewhere between the Residents' *Eskimo* and James Bond theme music. The glazed, fiery look in his eye tells me he's on a mission, like a street-corner evangelist.

"They are alien intruders from another time," he warns sharply, looking me in the eye as he sings.

"David Bowie got everything he knows about space music from this guy," says Perry. "He's serious. Too much ultraviolet out here."

As the skating black Goliath pesters Mark for money, Perry mentions that he has just decided to add a surfing scene to his movie, somewhere off the Pacific Coast of Mexico. Helicopter footage. His short white-boy dreads swing about his head as he talks about the logistics of the trip. A wedding first, to his lover Casey Niccoli with whom he's lived for six years, in some quiet spot in a Mexican village. Then surfing.

"Why not?" shrugs Mark, shooting a big grin and shelling out coins to the original Ziggy Stardust. "It's in the budget."

"I'm just going to take her down to Mexico, man, and I'm going to marry her. But it's going to be by Santerian *brujos*. It's this religion down there...."

"That's my show of love for her. She is a woman that wants to be married and I'm a man who doesn't, so my combination is I'll marry her by, you know, Santerian *brujos*. It's like, I'll mime how much I love

Perry Farrell of Jane's Addiction delivers us all from what is predictable in pop.

CHRIS CUFFARO/VISAGES

her, but I don't want a legal thing to be made about it; it should just be a symbol, a ritual. It's love mime."

"So you've worked out the movie's plot, or will it be loose like your first long video, 'Soul Kiss'?" I ask.

"You never know what'll happen because a lot of the way I like to film is *spontaneity*, so—let's just say an earthquake hits. I'm going to be filming that and if it fits in the movie, you know, in it goes. Most people make films about things that have already happened. It's kind of neat to make films about things that are gonna happen."

"Is that what Casey does, makes films?

"Yeah. That fucking bugs me."

Jane's Addiction is the future of Los Angeles, scrawled onto a cryptic, 4-D road warrior soulmap that no one can read yet.

Indeed, a wedding in Mexico is the most conservative setting Perry has yet to propose.

The first word was that Jane's Addiction were throwing a wild, sensual wedding ceremony to be celebrated in the Amazon headlands of the Peruvian rainforest. Rumor had it that the band would be performing on camera in the jungle. Light camera gear, instruments, and acres of raw celluloid would be trucked or backpacked into some remote locale amongst the supposedly friendly Andean mountain folks. (Perry hoped the farmers and villagers would join in the festivities.) Who gives a shit if nobody speaks Spanish decent enough to get the whole point of this ritual across to the locals? As the *pulque* and the coke began to flow in abundance, the weirdness of this spectacle would be fodder enough for the camera.

My editors were going to have me parachute in on that one, since we weren't really invited. But the logistics proved too overwhelming and the idea was scrapped. About a month later, after Jane's made a management change and instituted a total media blackout, I got a late-night call regarding a radical new plan.

A secret desert camping party, hosted by Jane's Addiction for the winners of some radio station trivia contest. The winners were going to have to know a lot about American pop art or 1940s appliances or some such thing. Definitely not as juicy as the rainforest, but this locale held more potential for American-style mayhem. *Youth gone wild.* The lucky winners were gonna be loaded into buses with blacked-out windows in downtown Hollywood—maybe the rock'n'roll Denny's or the Guitar Institute of Technology—and then blindfolded and trucked over the San Gabriel Mountains and into the desert to a secret hideaway where Jane's Addiction would rock their hot little heads from the back of a flatbed truck. And all the while, Perry's henchmen would run amok and burn through a Coppola-epic in celluloid.

I'm still waiting for a second phone call on that one, telling me where the bus will be picking us up.

For now, Perry and the film crew are in the pool at Mark's place, 200 yards from the ocean's edge, getting in shape for a surfing wedding in Mexico.

Their first manager was a music-loving prostitute. The band loved her dearly, but she too left town and has not been heard from since. Some of their greatest shows were financed by her. The fans were greeted at the box office by manager number one, who insisted on going topless—honest. Inside, bands played to their sweaty friends, and occasionally dealt with their inner most feelings, watching a transsexual dance troupe.

—from the official biography, *Bred and Spread From Los Angeles, CA: The Mighty Jane's Addiction*

Jane's Addiction, left to right: Eric Avery, Stephen Perkins, Perry Farrell, and Dave Navarro.

Did I mention yet that Jane's Addiction sound like a fiery Watts street riot, entire neighborhoods babbling drunken verses from Whitman and trying to hurl themselves from the planet with the grace and drama of perfect rock'n'roll negation? They do. They are a band of moments—careening about the stage on the lyrical language of Dave Navarro's heroic guitar, plowing into the tail end of the future with naked, sweating, Rollins intensity, but willing to build a subtle moment around The Perfect Word. Writer Dave Carpenter once called it "martial bebop." They understand drama as well as any band, ever, without performing gross rock anthems. Ever.

Probably for that very reason, lots of critics have dubbed them Art Rock, or have at least set them up as being arty. What the fuck *they are*. Athletic aesthetes trying to find a way out of their skin. But just knowing something about the art of music or sculpture or history doesn't automatically send one tumbling into sheets of esoterica. Yeah, Perry sometimes goes onstage in a girdle or bloomers or even a clown suit, and yeah, they've all been known to wear skirts or flood the stage with dry ice fog. But they couldn't come off so street level righteous—in person or on vinyl—if any of this were really calculated pretense.

"I wouldn't fight it," says Stephen. "I'd rather be an art band, than."

"Yeah, I prefer that to puffy hair," nods Eric.

Drummer Stephen Perkins surveys the conference room up at Jensen Communications, plops down into a chair and runs his hands through his incredible curly mane.

Stephen is so sunny and healthy I can hardly stand it. His side of the room is vibrating. You know you're in the room with a health freak. Since he got enough money to rent a 24-hour lock-out drum studio, he says he jams about 15 hours a day. Then he gets on his mountain bike and heads out for some light hill-climbing. Shit, put Stephen and Perry on a treadmill and they'd light the entire valley.

"Here, Stephen, have some Oreos," I say.

On a quieter note, Eric pads into the room, accompanied by an aura of calm. Eric puts his thoughts together in a stream of literate, endearing prose. The two of them explain that Navarro has gone on vacation for an indeterminate time. Not satisfied with spouting off more of my own theories about what makes Jane's tick, I ask them to elucidate.

ERIC: You brought up the word libido. People's libidos—who we are—is a lot more complex than what's been portrayed. I know that, like, in terms of, well, sexual fantasies and stuff, nobody just likes girls lying on Porsches. You know, no one wants to *just* fuck girls lying on Porsches.

SPIN: *And you thrive on the resistance to that idea?*

STEPHEN: We'll be in a place full of fucking cowboys going, "What the hell, Jane's Addiction?" And that night will turn into fucking craziness—we'll play the hardest, meanest songs we got and Perry will just say, "Fuck your mother, fuck your sister, and fuck 'em all in the ass." I think it was when we were opening up for Iggy and it was just like that.

ERIC: That's the place where David got hassled in the bathroom . . . for being a fag. It was a bunch of, like, jarhead, wife-beater, if-you're-different-you're-a-fag type guys.

STEPHEN: And "you're going to die if you're a fag in this city."

ERIC: Or, "I'll beat you up cause you're gay because when I masturbate I'm a fag."

STEPHEN: The next two weeks you're going, "Dude, that was the fucking greatest. We had the best time that night." As opposed to your normal San Diego State show when, you know, 15,000 kids are there to have fun and you go home and it's nothing really special.

ERIC: But those kinds of things are markers. One of the main things that we're about is just *anti* that kind of thinking—scumbag, redneck, closed-minded, shithead, you know. I mean, that prevailing closed-minded fascist kind of thing is so opposite of what we're about, and it's nice to be reminded that we're doing stuff that upsets those assholes.

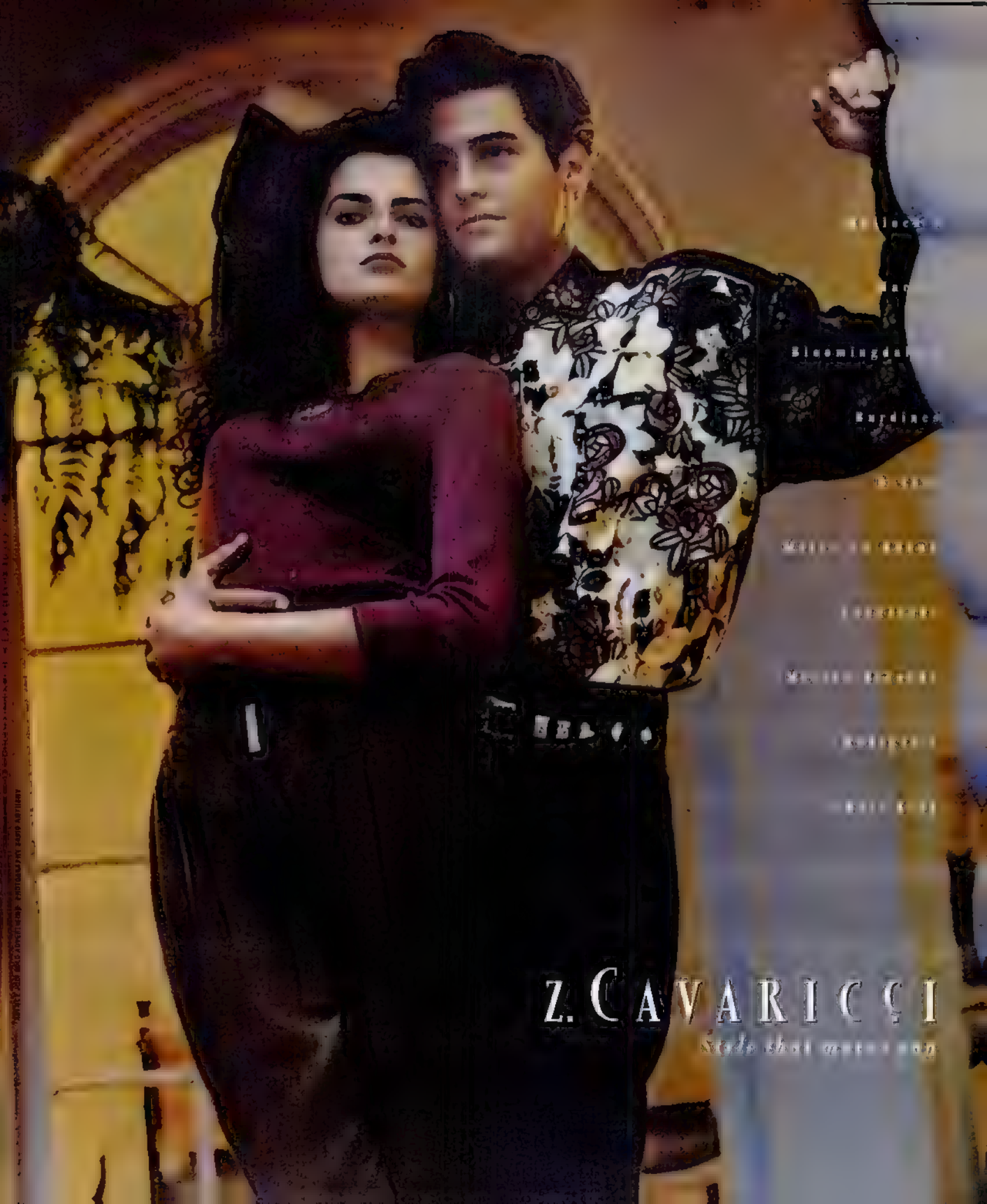
STEPHEN: And it's funny to be in the middle of their club and they're all sitting there and it's just us four and maybe a couple roadies and we're just like the guys they all hate: "We hate those four guys."

ERIC: Yeah, cause if those people immediately accepted us then I'm in the wrong band. There's a gray area, like—a darkness—to our music that is intangible.

What does that mean? Are Jane's Addiction inherently political?

STEPHEN: I think the lyrics can be and our presence as a band in this industry is completely political, but it's not our fault.

FRANK OCKENFELS/OUTLINE PRESS


Z. CAVARICCI

DIAMOND TWO'S

SWEEPSTAKES

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The guys listed below didn't think so, and neither did their gals. In fact, it was on a concert trip that one of these gentlemen rockers decided to spend at least two months' salary to present the object of their affections with a rock of a Diamond Engagement Ring. Or so the story goes.

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IS 2 MONTHS' SALARY TOO MUCH TO SPEND FOR SOMETHING THAT LASTS FOREVER?

My sex and my drugs and my rock and roll . . . they're the only things that keep me here. So get your fuckin' piss cup out my fuckin' face. My sex and my drugs and my rock and roll are my fuckin' own business. . . .
—Jane's Addiction, *Ritual de lo Habitual*

In early 1988, when *Nothing's Shocking*—Jane's Addiction's second LP and their first release for Warner Bros.—lay on the desks of the nation's major distribution chains, eight refused to carry it. The cover featured a sculpture, painstakingly crafted by Perry, of Casey as Siamese twins. She is nude and sitting demurely in a unique two-person rocking chair. The sculpture's heads were set aflame for the black-and-white photograph; there is a look of calm acceptance, both harrowing and comical, on Casey's faces. Under the flaming figures ran the title: *Nothing's Shocking.*

I mean, it's a sculpture, for chrissake. By the fall of '88, all but two distributors weakened, under righteous pressure from Warner Bros., and agreed to put it out. Now, like most such victories for the First Amendment and freedom of expression, debate concerning the album has petered out. But the experience politicized the Jane's' approach and put them on the defensive.

"The chains totally flipped over—from 'We can't use this' to 'Yeah, we love it,' " grumbles Stephen. "But they gave us trouble—and then we won best record cover or something. Some CMJ award. Stupid shit that really don't matter after we went through hell to get on the racks."

Enter 1990 and the new Jane's album, *Ritual de lo Habitual*. The climate of fear and art censorship has hardly mellowed with the general debunking of Senator Helms and the total physical decay of former Attorney General Edwin Meese. The National Endowment for the Arts is still being investigated for granting money for allegedly "obscene" art. Miami rappers 2 Live Crew are arrested for inviting girls onstage to suck cock.

Almost all of Warner's usual distributors allegedly balked at Perry's proposed cover for *Ritual*, so Jane's Addiction's newest album will be released with two covers—one featuring the Perry Farrell original and one totally white. That seems to have appeased the more anal distributors, though they are almost certain to lose sales with the unappealing white cover.

The fetish Perry created to grace the cover of *Ritual* now covers an entire wall of his living room. On it are three life-size figures resembling Perry, Casey, and another woman, curled together in harmony on an old box spring. The figures are at least partially nude. They are surrounded by a field of found objects: painted, re-dressed plastic dolls; candelabra holding burning candles; scattered Tarot cards; household appliances; photographs; cheesy paintings. Best of all, the three figures' heads are fitted with gold rays like a trio of medieval Christs.

Perry refuses to comment on the piece. "Let 'em guess. If you can't figure it out, you've not lived," Perry quips. "I'm not exactly sure what it is about the fetish that offends the powers that be. It may be nudity, it may be the three-way idea. It may be the ritualistic way in which the objects are arranged. Who the fuck knows."

Those albums arriving at record stores with a plain white jacket will carry a message inside that Perry scrawled for the occasion. It's lengthy and rambling, like his conversation, but hits the right buttons. It begins:

> To the Mosquitoes,
> We have more influence over your children than you do, but we love your children. . . . Nature did right in tying the infant to the female. . . . I understand why they want to protect their children, but for their own good, let me point out that though you may have to explain subjects to your children that you perceive as wrong, it is better to have the freedom to explain it in your own words than be silenced under a government that has the power to squash anyone who opposes their views."

As far as freedom of expression and the First Amendment are concerned, it's been a frustrating year for Jane's Addiction. Just before this controversy busted out about the cover art, the boys found themselves confronted with a management team who wanted piss-tests for drugs. The band told the guy to go fuck himself. Warner jumped in and has since smoothed things out, but, for Perry, it's almost enough to make him go into filmmaking full time—where nudity is encouraged and drugs make great scripts.

Perry and I are sitting inside a shady cafe on the Venice boardwalk with the film crew. Perry keeps cracking us up with his account of how he first got Navarro to bust out of his blues tradition, painting a portrait of endless studio hours where he kept asking Dave to restructure his thinking—blues and then anti-blues.

"Now he's a guitar hero to millions and everybody is trying to play in this signature, fucked-up, frustrated, freaked style," he muses. "All over the place. Amorphous."

The Movie has forced Perry to confront some of his own idiosyncracies. For one thing, he's taken to toting a schedule book around with him. At age 31, he might even think about going back to Queens, New York, to see his family. For the first time since he was 16.

"I don't know. I called my old man today," he says, "for the first time in years. I talked to my sister and she said he was goin' down fast. I didn't want him to die with that on my chest. He had a heart attack on the day I ran away. Then, years later, I called my dad and my new stepmother and we got into a big fight and I told them both to fuck off—that I never wanted to see them again or speak to them—and he had his second heart attack.

"When I was 16 I was making surfboards. I came out to California just to go surfing. Had a bunch of art supplies. . . I just knew that I hated my life. I mean, I've lived out here—actually on the beach—for months at a time.

Later, Perry offers up a more sobering perspective:

"Sometimes I think we were all put here to learn a lesson, and sometimes I think, 'No, life absolutely is the most amazing place you could think of.' It's got every situation imaginable, from the most beautiful, tender, sweet, loving, caring—to the most debauched, disgusting, sick, lowlife, degrading situations imaginable. And the way people love each other is so amazing. What one person deems is disgusting another falls in love with—men with elephantitis of the face who get married to interesting women. A guy who's good-looking and falls in love with a 90-year-old lady. And it's *real*. Every time I think about bailing out on life, I think, 'Your time will come very soon and don't worry about a thing. Everyone gets the brass ring.' You know?"

"I said she'd have the best of everything.
Her diamond shows I keep my word!"
The Diamond
Engagement Ring
Is two months
much to spend
that lasts forever.
JCPenney
A diamond is forever.

SPIN

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1.....	**Various Artists**	*World Domination or Death*
2.....	**Eric B. & Rakim**	*Let The Rhythm Hit 'Em*
3.....	**Concrete Blonde**	*Bloodletting*
4.....	**John Hiatt**	*Stolen Moments*
5.....	**Iggy Pop**	*Brick By Brick*
6.....	**Steve Wynn**	*Kerosene Man*
7.....	**Various Artists**	*Jetson's Soundtrack*
8.....	**Harry Crews**	*Naked in Garden Hills*
9.....	**Ice Cube**	*Amerikkka's Most Wanted*
10.....	**Wynton Marsalis**	*The Resolution of Romance-Standard Time Vol II.*
11.....	**Poison**	*Flesh and Blood*
12.....	**The Winans**	*Return*
13.....	**Billy Bragg**	*Internationale*

HEAVY ROTATION

1.....	**The Breeders**	*Pod*
2.....	**Dustdevils**	*Geek Drip*
3.....	**Mojo Nixon**	*Otis*
4.....	**The Strawberry Zots**	*Cars, Flowers, Telephones*
5.....	**Masters of Reality**	*Masters of Reality*
6.....	**Eric B. & Rakim**	*Let the Rhythm Hit 'Em*

CMJ COLLEGE RADIO TOP 20

1.....	**Lou Reed/John Cale**	*Songs For Drella*
2.....	**Sundays**	*Reading, Writing And Arithmetic*
3.....	**Public Enemy**	*Fear Of A Black Planet*
4.....	**Adrian Belew**	*Young Lions*
5.....	**Chills**	*Submarine Bells*
6.....	**Sinead O'Connor**	*I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got*
7.....	**Midnight Oil**	*Blue Sky Mining*
8.....	**Fugazi**	*Repeater*
9.....	**Depeche Mode**	*Violator*
10.....	**Sidewinders**	*Auntie Ramos' Pool Hall*
11.....	**House of Love**	*House of Love*
12.....	**The Church**	*Gold Afternoon Fix*
13.....	**Pol Dog Pondering**	*Wishing Like a Mountain and Thinking...*
14.....	**Dead Milkmen**	*Metaphysical Graffitti*
15.....	**Big Dipper**	*Slam*
16.....	**Lightning Seeds**	*Cloudcuckooland*
17.....	**The Fall**	*Extricate*
18.....	**Bad Brains**	*The Youth Are Getting Restless*
19.....	**Lloyd Cole**	*Lloyd Cole*
20.....	**Suzanne Vega**	*Days of Open Hand*

continued from page 43

music" department with the promotional wherewithal to swamp available (and shrinking) outlets for such music. As a result, not only is so-called "alternative music" becoming more narrowly defined ("People should know an alternative to what's there," says Thurston. "But are we still the alternative, being on a corporate label?"), but the bands that try to operate on an independent level are finding it increasingly difficult. College radio, formerly a bastion of independent music, has turned largely into a "farm league" for the major labels. Were Sonic Youth to start today, they would have a hard time achieving the level of success they've now reached, albeit after nine years.

So in a sense, SY are lucky. But their current success is also a tribute to how hard they've worked—after all, there are bands, such as Pussy Galore and Live Skull, just as good as SY that never "made it." The fact is, Sonic Youth, like Hüsker Dü, the Replacements, and R.E.M. before them, toured like demons. Inaccessible music remains so only if a band is unwilling or unable to give people access to it. That's never been Sonic Youth's hangup. The result has been a slow but steady progress over the years in the number of converts to the "sonic life," even to the point where old fans are predictably crying "sell-out" at the band's move to Geffen. Rather than selling out, the band feels they're "buying in."

But it can't go on like this forever. Every progression reaches an end, and so too will Sonic Youth, probably within the next few years. What then?

"I don't know what I'm going to do, but I don't think I'll always play in a band," says Kim. "I mean, it would be really ugly. Once you hit your 40's, it's time to retire."

The official Sonic Youth line on their new album, *Goo*, is that it's a reaction to their last record, *Daydream Nation*, which tended to have very extended, nicely textured, almost psychedelic intros and outros, whereas on *Goo* most of the songs begin and end abruptly. They're also trying to reach more people with this record, to keep growing, to find a new way to get across to people what they want to say. (Blah blah blah.)

"Yeah, that's our line," says Lee Ranaldo, wearing sunglasses even though we're in a dark East Village bar (SY are very much into sunglasses—the pile I saw on a table while they were shooting their video was worthy of Elton John.) "All bands have a line when they set out to promote a new record; we're no different. But there's an element of truth to it as well. In actual fact, though, we don't really think about it in terms of development or progression."

Lee doodles on a napkin, which he later folds and puts in his pocket. He's probably the most serious member of the band, or at least the most earnest—though he has a goofy side as well. He's spent the week shopping for a new video camera (he's documented most of the band's history on film and videotape) but promises not to talk about it.

SPIN: What does the future hold for Sonic Youth?

LEE: I think about the future, but I don't really think about what it's going to hold. I mean, we're not kids, and we're real serious about what we're doing. And being in the business in a major league way, they expect you to do things that, at a certain point, will become incredibly distasteful. You feel like a prostitute or something. I mean I'm not totally down on it; there are a lot of great things about being on a major label in terms of access and so on. It's just that if you're struggling to accomplish a goal which is only, like, to sell a million copies, that's just jive. That's why Billy Idol will probably end up on the cover of SPIN instead of us. And that's fair enough if you're a businessman, but I don't want to be a businessman.

Yeah, but like it or not you are a businessman.

That's in itself a hard pill to swallow. You never start out doing it this imagining that you want it as your profession. If you stay in the business long enough you'll always get to that point—where you're juggling how much you're doing because it's your profession versus something else you might be doing. We've always fought against that professionalism attitude. We've always played music because that was just what we did, what we grew up doing, what we're still doing. There's a point where you just can't look at it that simply anymore. I find all that stuff kind of uncomfortable to deal with, and yet it is very much a reality.

Do you really think the 14-year-old kid who worships Bon Jovi or Guns N' Roses is going to appreciate your music?

THURSTON: You know, nothing's impossible. But to them we might be a little too weird. There're certain aspects of our sound that for the most part will sound really bad to them. When we went to Russia last year, a lot of people thought we were just doing it wrong, because their only guidelines were the Beatles and Iron Maiden. So these suburban kids who listen to Jovi and G N' R for the most part—they don't know any better, they're not musically inclined. It's more a social thing for them.

To me, our music is elitist, in a way. We're tied in with this elitist aesthetic. The only way to overcome it is not to think about it, but you're instantly tied into it because you come out of it. Just the fact that each of us was one of those kids who would say, "Fuck Led Zep, let's drive into the city and see a Ramones gig." And the next day in high school you'd tell somebody that and they'd think you were a total alien. I was one of maybe three people in my high school who knew about Patti Smith and the Ramones.

I don't want to subject anybody against their will to something that's outside their sensibilty. Why should Geffen force-feed anything down anybody's throat? Guns N' Roses are easy because it's a path that's already been paved by all the lame rock classics. But us, who are they going to feed it to?

Won't they feed it into the usual channels and see what happens?

That's the most interesting thing to us. The housewife who's thirty-something in Middle America and buys one cassette a month—probably even bought the G N' R one because it was played a lot and she liked that one song—she's definitely not going to buy our record. And if she does, she's going to be subjected to something that's most likely going to disturb her. And I don't really want to disturb anybody. I don't want to be forced on anybody.

More so than a lot of bands, Sonic Youth have always shared a kind of collective sensibility. In interviews, usually given as a group, whoever answers the question speaks for the band as a whole—e.g., "We hate spinach," "We love Advil," or whatever. This impression of solidarity is, of course, not entirely accurate.

"Is that really annoying?" asks Kim. "Sometimes just for the sake of getting the interview over with, I won't open my mouth to say, 'Well, I don't think so.' But I often don't think so. I think in a way it's kind of dishonest to think of the band as a unified thing, which we're really not. Ultimately it does come together in some kind of unity, but one thing that's kept the music varied are the differences in our personalities."

In the same way, SY gives the impression that they're just, as one critic put it, "really happy to be in a band together." You'd imagine that they never fought with each other, that they always agreed on everything. You'd be wrong.

"Oh yeah, we fight all the time," says Kim. "I mean, Thurston's a Leo, he has a temper. But it's usually not for any rational reason. Steve probably feels that he always gets the brunt of it. Even though he's been in the band for four years, he's still the new kid on the block. He doesn't have the same background musically, and he's younger than us. He thinks that we always bury the drums when we mix our records."

Actually, there are three songs on the new record where the drums are pretty much at the right level," says Steve Shelley, smiling as he prepares to devour an enormous cheeseburger in a West Village bistro. Steve is, at 28, not only the youngest member of Sonic Youth, but the only unmarried one as well. He's also one of the few people I've met who's never so much as tasted beer in his life.

"It's funny, when that whole straight-edge hardcore scene started in D.C. in the 80s I thought, yeah, great, that's how I live anyway. But I never found it necessary to be a fascist about it, the way some of them did."

Steve joined the band in 1985, just after they had returned from touring in Europe. As luck would have it, he was staying at Thurston and Kim's place while they were gone. Their old drummer quit on the flight back, and when SY came home they asked Steve if he wanted to join.

"It's scary how much of a fan I was right before I joined. *Bad Moon Rising* had just come out and I would go down to the stores and just look at the record jacket. So I had no hesitation about joining when they asked."

His decision was salutary; the dynamic sense he brought to the band fit in well with their emergent songwriting skills. Sonic Youth wouldn't be as strong a musical force with a different drummer. From *Evol* on through *Goo*, Steve's sharp sense of how to play within a song rather than underneath it has contributed dramatically to their development.

"I'm a better guitar player than Thurston and Lee, too," Steve adds.

Although Kim says she's "always tried to avoid the married couple thing," her marriage to Thurston plays a large part in Sonic Youth, if only because it's unusual for such an arrangement to be successful for such a long time.

continued on page 90

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It was twenty years ago today, Shirley Partridge taught the band to play. Some words from the birds, reported by MARK BLACKWELL.

The Partridge Family Tree

Edited by

Lauren Spencer.

On September 25th, 1970, the multicolored Partridge Family tour bus rolled across the television screens of America for the very first time. Combining elements from *The Brady Bunch* and *The Monkees*, *The Partridge Family* loosely reflected the career of the Cowsills, a musical family from Rhode Island whose hits included the theme from *Hair* and who toured in the late 60s.

On the show, Shirley Partridge played a widowed mother of five who led her clan through four years of wacky singing adventures with the help of Reuben Kinkaid, their would-be Donald Trump (if it weren't for those damn kids!) manager. Sixteen-year-old Keith was lead singer and family Casanova, while his younger brother Danny provided guitar and necessary Bart Simpson mischief. Episodes dealt with the band's adventures on the road, as well as problems that most any family could relate to (like when Laurie's new braces started picking up the local radio station).

The fictional family was a hit, off the tube as well as on, despite the fact that their songs were actually recorded by studio musicians and only "Keith" and "Shirley" sang their own vocals. The Partridges' first single, "I Think I Love You," was a Number One smash in 1970. During the course of the show, they garnered several Top 40 tunes, including "Doesn't Somebody Want to Be Wanted?" and "I Woke Up In Love This Morning." The Partridges were marketed to the max, their images appearing on everything from comic books to lunch boxes.

The show went off the air in August 1974, only to be resurrected the very next month as *The Partridge Family, 2200 A.D.*, a Saturday morning cartoon sequel that lasted one year. Recent rumblings of reunions remain unsubstantiated, although a few years ago some of the members did go as far as signing contracts for a special. Laurie was to be the only missing Partridge, written out by necessity as having "moved to L.A. and become a lawyer." However, studio red tape and a writers' strike resulted in the project being scrapped before it got off the ground. Twenty years after they hatched, here's a look at where the Partridges have migrated.

Reuben Kinkaid

Originally an amateur magician from Indiana, Dave Madden starred in the 60s on television's *Camp Runamuck* and *Laugh-In*, and on stage as Frank Sinatra's opening stand-up comedy act, before landing his role as Partridge manager. When the show was over, he tried his hand at theater, hit the celebrity guest-appearance circuit, parlaying a 1978 cameo on *Alice* (as Flo's boyfriend Earl Hicks) into a role that lasted seven years. During this period his vocal cords became stars in their own right, as he started doing voice-overs and announcements for radio and television commercials. Today he can be heard on ads for Denny's, Kellogg's, Pepsi, Oscar Meyer, Flintstone Vitamins, Fox Television, Bell Ye low Pages, and dozens of other products. This past spring, as David Cassidy inked his new record contract with Enigma, Madden turned up for a photo-op, comically reprising the managerial role of Reuben Kinkaid. "That was fun, but I really don't think we could all ever get back together as a group," figures Madden. "We've just scattered in too many different directions by now."

Shirley

Shirley Jones made her motion picture debut in 1955's *Oklahoma!*, and went on to make more than two-dozen movies, including *The Music Man*, *Carousel* and *Elmer Gantry* (for which she won an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actress). *The Partridge Family* was Shirley's first TV series, specifically built around the established actress, the kids were chosen according to how well they worked with Jones as mom. After the show, she continued acting, singing and appearing in commercials, eventually starring in a short lived second series, 1980's family-oriented *Shirley*. Looking suspiciously young, she now tours North America singing Broadway tunes and songs from her musicals. "One of the funniest things about the Partridges is that we were constantly being asked to go out on the road," she laughs. "Everywhere we appeared someone would ask us to play or sing. Even Vegas wanted The Partridge Family. The joke, of course, being that there was no Partridge Family. We had so much success you just couldn't make people understand that."

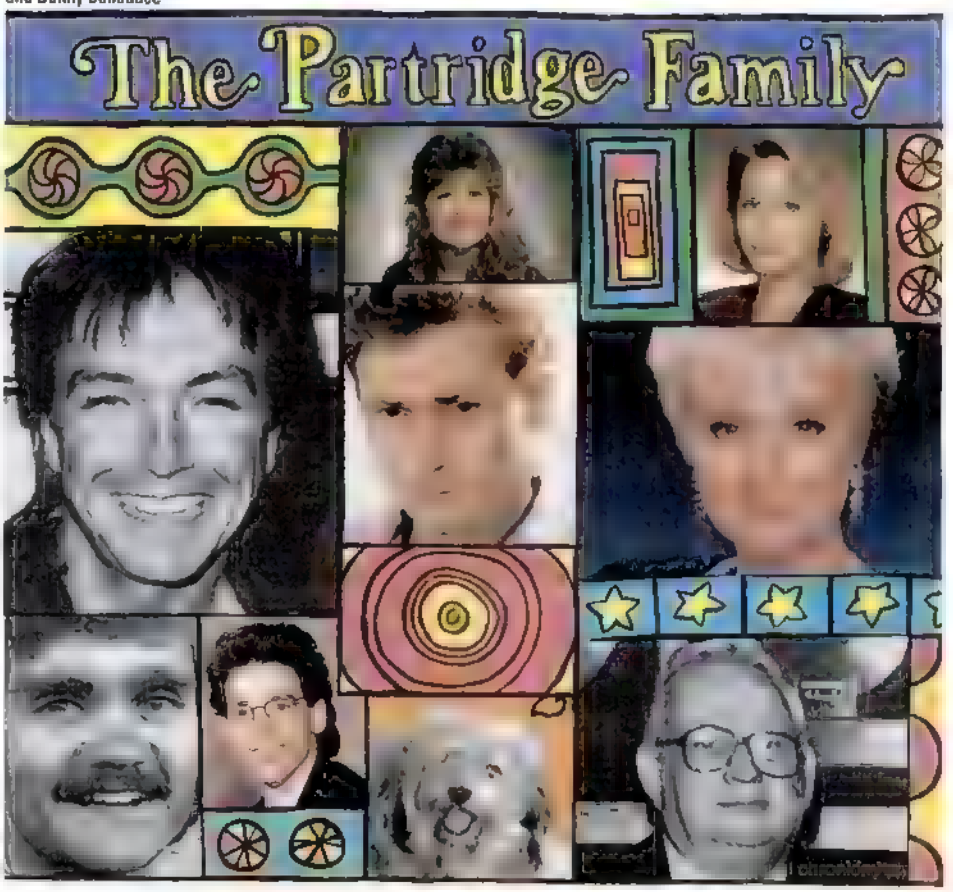
Shirley and her comedian/producer husband reside in Beverly Hills and have recently written a book about their lives, *Shirley Jones and Marty Ingles, An Unlikely Love Story*.

Keith

The real-life stepson of his TV mom, David Cassidy was transformed overnight from an actor (bit parts on shows like *Bonanza*, *The Mod Squad* and *Marcus Welby, M.D.*) into a full-fledged teen idol. His popularity on the show spawned a solo career that often created hysteria among his fans, culminating in a May 1974 London performance that, because of the number of people injured, the British Safety Council referred to as a "suicide concert." (One 14-year-old fan subsequently died of a heart attack.) David's musical career after the Partridges was much less spectacular, and he briefly returned to the tube in 1978 with a detective show called *David Cassidy: –Man Undercover*.

In the 80s he disappeared from the mainstream, breeding racehorses and developing a fairly successful stage career in America and London. Now David is ready to rise again, with two major movies

***Upper left*, then: 1970 (*clockwise from top right*), Susan Dey, Shirley Jones, Simone, Jeremy Gelbwaks, David Cassidy, Suzanne Crough, and Danny Bonaduce. *Below*, now: 1990 (*clockwise from top right*), Susan Dey (as *L.A. Law*'s Grace Van Owen), Shirley Jones, Dave Madden, Simone, Jeremy Gelbwaks, Brian Forster, David Cassidy, Suzanne Crough, and Danny Bonaduce**



NINA ROBERTS

in the can as well as a new album scheduled to be released this month. "For a long time I struggled to distance myself from the bubble-gum cards and cereal-box photos, because nobody could possibly take me seriously," David says. "But now I have a great sense of humor about the show, because I'm far enough away from it. Finally, I think I'm ready to show people who David Cassidy really is."

Laurie

Susan Dey was a 16-year-old model living on the East Coast when she landed the role of Laurie and moved to California. When the show was over, she moved on to TV guest appearances and low-grade movies such as *Skyjacked* and *First Love*. Her desire to prove herself in drama resulted in her taking what she now refers to as "melodramatic roles at a time when 'women in peril' scripts were the only work available." When her "tolerance level finally burst," she strove for bigger and better things and eventually became the most visible post-Partridge. In 1983 she appeared with Dennis Weaver in the TV series *Emerald Point N.A.S.*, and now stars as attorney Grace Van Owen on *L.A. Law*. Her work has earned an Emmy nomination and a Golden Globe Award, and she recently started her own production company.

"*The Partridge Family* was like a gift to me," says Susan. "It was a crash course for everything I needed to know about this business. Most importantly, I learned that TV stardom means absolutely nothing in the real world."

Susan has been married to a producer for two years and has an 11-year-old daughter from a previous marriage.

Danny

Fiery redhead Danny Bonaduce, who got his acting start with shots on sitcoms such as *Bewitched* and *The Andy Griffith Show*, went on from the Partridges to occasional supermarket openings ("There's a blue light special in sporting goods and Danny Partridge is in frozen foods") and the standard *Love Boat/Fantasy Island* guest-star circuit. Danny also studied Japanese and karate, winning the 1980 and 1981 international karate championships in his weight class, and he worked for a while as the "worst fucking bartender in the world." One of his most memorable—and hardest to live down—jobs was his movie role as a DJ in the late night cable T&A/cheerleader favorite *H.O.T.S.* Most recently, he was employed as a real rock 'n' roll DJ for Philadelphia's WEGX-FM (Eagle 106). This summer he left the station in search of new radio horizons.

Last March, Danny was arrested in Daytona Beach, Florida, after police observed him participating in a suspicious street transaction. (They allegedly discovered crack stashed in his snakeskin boots.) Danny regards the arrest as a blessing, and is in the process of cleaning up his act in a rehab program. "I'm one of those people whose life is so fucked up you could use me as an example of the whole 'don't put your child in show business' thing," he laughs. "But that show was the highlight of my childhood. I really dug it."

Christopher (1970-71)

Jeremy Gelbwaks, the Partridge drummer, was the first to leave the clan, moving to Virginia when his father was transferred from his space program job in California.

In the late 70s, his family bought a dairy farm in upstate New York, setting up an organic garden that lasted six years. Jeremy studied science and business at a local college, graduating in 1982, and worked with computers for a while, yet soon found showbiz calling again. He dabbled in acting through "off-off-off-off-Broadway" theater, but eventually decided it was the business aspect of the entertainment industry that most interested him.

Jeremy is now establishing himself in the production and locations department of a feature film company, and has recently worked on *Bonfire of the Vanities*, *Q&A*, and *Enemies: A Love Story*. Ideally, he sees his role as a "liaison between the fantasy world of the film and the real world of the people and places [involved in the production]."

"One reason I feel more at home in the entertainment industry is that my past isn't such an issue," Jeremy explains. "It becomes a real obstacle when you're trying to sell a computer system and the person is getting all excited that you were a TV star as a kid."

Jeremy got married early this summer and is now living in New Jersey.

Christopher (1971-1974)

After the departure of Jeremy Gelbwaks, Christopher's role was taken over by Brian Forster, an 11-year-old veteran of commercials—including a Nestle's Quik ad that won the prize for Best Children's Commercial of 1967.

Though acting was obviously in his blood (his grandfather Alan Napier played the butler Alfred on TV's *Batman*) Brian gave it up after the show went off the air. A later attempt to get back into the business was unsuccessful, although he almost scored a guest appearance on an episode of *Eight Is Enough*. Brian graduated from Humboldt State College with a degree in zoology in 1985, abandoning his earlier plans to become a physical therapist for auto racing. These days he road races and works as a senior instructor at California's Bonderant Racing School, teaching everything from basic highway driving to corporate chauffeur antiterrorist tactics.

"The Partridges were a lot of fun," reminisces Brian. "We had problems like any real family, but I'd love to see a reunion happen." Meanwhile, Brian plans to extend his road racing to the stock car oval circuits, à la *Days of Thunder*.

Tracy

The youngest member of the cast was five-year-old Suzanne Crough, who continued her career after 1974 in commercials, TV, and film. Her post-Partridge work, in which she "actually acted," included the 1977 series *Mulligan's Stew*, and the Taylor Hackford film *Teenage Father*, which received an Academy Award for Best Short Film.

Suzanne's last flirtation with the Partridge image came just a few years ago, when she participated in a variety stage show that featured such fellow former sitcom stars as *Leave It to Beaver*'s Wally (Tony Dow) and *The Brady Bunch*'s Bobby (Mike Lookinland). The show was designed to travel across the country, but never made it past its first weekend at Magic Mountain Amusement Park.

Suzanne, who was once pals with Janet Jackson in a special reduced-time high school, moved away from acting in the late 80s when she began taking business courses, married a highway patrolman, and had a baby girl. She now manages an acting workshop for kids, runs a bookstore in the San Diego area, and is planning to resurrect her acting career.

"I'd love to do something like *Knots Landing* and play the so-called bitch," she confides. "I'm not a little girl anymore."

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ENGLISH LEATHER MUSK *The Unfair Advantage.*

David: We Think We Love You

They don't make teen idols like they used to. I thank God I was seven in 1972 and just old enough to worship, at the heels of my older sister Bibi, the silky-voiced, sandy-shag-haired, green-speckle-eyed, bell-bottomed, thoroughly delicious pop-god and lead singer of *The Partridge Family*: David Cassidy, *aka* Keith Partridge. Not only was he blissfully lovely, but almost all of the songs they had him sing were about him loving a girl (*i.e.*, one's self) to pieces but not being sure she loved him back, which ultimately led him to sing, with that creamy-yet-tough voice of his, astonishing things like: "Believe me, you really don't have to worry, I only want to make you happy / but if you say hey go away I will (gasp!) but I think better still I'd better stay around and love you / Do you think I have a case, let me ask you to your face—DO YOU THINK YOU LOVE ME? I THINK I LOVE YOU . . . " My sister and I nearly ruptured our intestines jumping up and down on our beds each night howling, "I THINK I LOVE YOU" into a flashlight, while David beamed down at us from life-sized posters on the wall.

Lord, that guy had us *pulverized*. Our grandmother took us to see him at Nassau coliseum in 1972 and all I remember is that we had matching ankle-length purple dresses and cried through the whole concert. I cried because I was too short to see and everybody was screaming so loud I certainly couldn't hear anything -and Bibi cried because she *could* see him, but couldn't touch him.

Bibi had it worse than I did. She would get *violent* if anyone tried to get between her and the TV on Saturday nights at 8 P.M. when *The Partridge Family* was on. Out of pure spite I once tried to watch something else and she jumped me like a Sumo wrestler and nearly broke my arm. A girlfriend of mine reported that she once whacked her little sister over the head with an unripened banana — so hard she fainted for a similar offense.

We had no idea what had hit us, but whatever it was, it was more fun than anything before or since. The egg cracking open and all the multicolored partridges scuttling across the screen, the keyboard, the drum fill, and then—pure bliss—David's voice in the theme song: "Hello world here's a song that we're singin' / to make you HAPPYYYY / A whole lotta lovin' is what we'll be bringin' to make you HAPPYYY . . . " By the time they came out in their little red suits and did the song at the end, we were numb with joy. "I remember the whole world standing still when they did the song," Bibi recalls. "It was just perfect euphoria."

Bibi used to sit in this big swivel chair listening to *Sound Magazine*, as loud as the little plastic record player would go, and just spin around and around until she got so dizzy she'd collapse on the floor. She thought "One Night Stand" was about a lemonade stand.

"I still listen to that record," she confesses. *I do too!* The songs are great. The production is great. And David—yes, we think we loved you, all of us—every red-blooded female who was on the American continent and old enough to watch television between 1970 and 1974

You were the first David and we'll always love you but you did fool us. We thought we'd grow up to meet men like you with silver boots and hip huggers and drop-dead looks who sat in Ferris wheels and sang songs about kissing pillows and meeting us halfway and loving us forever. Girls, if any of you have salvaged any of your David posters, send me one, will ya? I'm bored.

—Celia Farber

BOB GRUEN

COURTESY OF TOUCHSTONE PICTURES

Rockin' with Dick Tracy

Disney/Touchstone Pictures

All I can say is, "It's the most colorful movie I've ever seen." As an appetizer to *Dick Tracy* comes *Rollercoaster Rabbit* starring Roger Rabbit and Baby Herman, who is the most undisciplined child next to Bart Simpson. Yet the visual effects are just a tease compared to Tracy. The film only cost $30 million to make. Amazing when you see the list of characters and cast. Dick Van Dyke as D.A. Fletcher, Dustin Hoffman as Mumbles, Al Pacino as Big Boy Caprice, to name a few

Dick Tracy has many similarities to *Batman*: a kidnapping; a nutcase/villain, he even jumps through glass to save his girl, Tess Trueheart My compliments to Disney and Touchstone Pictures for making every building look like a gingerbread house. Yellow, baby blue, and green cars. Whoever did the scenery for the city skyline did the best I've ever seen and should be working with SPIN. The gold cobblestone bridge is a graffiti writer/artists orgasm. The dialogue is even more entertaining than my writing style of toasted English. I never liked Madonna or Warren Beatty, but I've developed a new sense of respect for both, especially Madonna I had the same attitude about Michael Keaton doing *Batman* as I did with Warren Beatty doing *Dick Tracy*, and you know what? They both pull it off Tracy rocks a tough guy because of a piece of chicken, and yellow trash cans and gang names like 88 Keys are all a part of this plot. Whatever doesn't warm your heart, the orange-ball sunset and original score by Danny Elfman will Until the next release.

Bönz Malone

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At the sixth International AIDS Conference, the circus whirls on. The HIV theory begins to crumble as the talk turns to new suspects—microbes called mycoplasmas. CELIA FARBER and ANTHONY LIVERSIDGE report.

Yet another top scientist has defected from the orthodox view that HIV alone is the cause of AIDS—none other than the man who discovered the virus almost seven years ago, Dr. Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute in Paris. One of the world's most prominent scientists, Dr. Montagnier shocked his colleagues at the sixth International AIDS Conference in San Francisco this year by making the statement that HIV alone may not kill enough cells to cause the array of diseases known as AIDS. If that sounds familiar, it's because AIDS renegade Dr. Peter Duesberg has been saying just that for three and a half years, often in this column.

Dr. Montagnier believes that a microbe known as a mycoplasma, which has been secretly present in HIV samples all along, is working in conjunction with HIV to cause the disease. Montagnier had four HIV isolates that killed T-cells in the lab. What puzzled him was how the virus killed T-cells and caused death, since it was barely present or active in the blood. The new discovery came when one of his coworkers added antibiotics to the HIV isolates and found that, afterwards, they no longer killed cells. He finally concluded that the antibiotics were removing mycoplasma contamination, without which the HIV isolates were harmless to T-cells. In other words, Montagnier found that the damage to the cells was done by the mycoplasma *and* HIV, and not by HIV alone.

Montagnier said that he found this mycoplasma in a substantial number of AIDS patients and speculated that the reason it had not yet been found in all of them is that it is too difficult to detect. "If the theory is confirmed," Philip Hilts of the *New York Times* wrote, "it would force a drastic reevaluation of efforts to prevent and treat AIDS."

Montagnier was harshly criticized for his theory which, although he did his best to couch it, amounts to a concession that HIV alone is not killing enough T-cells (immune system cells) to cause AIDS—precisely what molecular biologist Duesberg nearly lost his career for pointing out, three and a half years ago. Montagnier emphasized repeatedly that he still thinks HIV is the "basic cause of AIDS." But hang on. If HIV is not killing T-cells by itself, but only when something else is present—a mycoplasma, for example—then how can we logically call HIV the "basic cause"? Isn't that rather like a person waking up with a hangover and blaming it on the ice?

MARYANNE LIEBERMAN

Several scientists expressed their dismay and disbelief that this prominent scientist would "go out on a limb" and "risk his professional standing" by presenting such a radical theory without more evidence. HIV pioneer Jay Levy, of the University of California at San Francisco, rushed to the microphone after Montagnier's speech and dismissed the significance of his findings, saying that it would certainly be premature to say that antibiotics could hold back AIDS.

"Maybe he can't find an isolate that is uncontaminated by mycoplasmas," Levy later told SPIN, "but we have tested all of ours and not one of them so far has had the mycoplasma." James Curran, head of the AIDS program at the Centers for Disease Control, called Montagnier's mycoplasma theory "nonsense," and James Allen, director of the National AIDS Program Office of the Department of Health and Human Services, pointed out that Montagnier was talking of only four isolates, and asked, "How many people have AIDS worldwide? It is a very complex disease and mycoplasmas may be part of it, but they are not the cause."

Why so touchy, Dr. Allen? Nobody has called mycoplasmas "the cause." Certainly not Montagnier, who refers to it as a "cofactor." Now just what it is that makes HIV the factor and the mycoplasma the cofactor is unclear. The HIV debate, which was all but nonexistent, has suddenly become a purely speculative and random tug-of-war between HIV and whatever else—"cofactors." And curiously enough, it seems most scientists are still stubbornly rooting for HIV, which for its part, doesn't really want to budge from the way it behaves. HIV still does not infect or kill a significant number of cells, is still an extremely slow moving and latent virus, and it still doesn't cause AIDS in animal models.

Mycoplasmas, by contrast, as first discovered by Dr. Shyh Ching Lo of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (see "Words From the Front," Aug. '88, Aug '89, Jan. '90), have caused AIDS-like symptoms and death in monkeys and have been found to cause "massive cell death." Dr. Lo, a leading pathologist who has been studying the role of mycoplasmas in AIDS for years, reported on six cases of non-risk-group HIV-negative patients who developed symptoms commonly seen in AIDS (e.g., severe flu symptoms) and died within four weeks. Their autopsies revealed that *mycoplasmas* had caused extensive cell death and tissue infection. Whether those cases can be classified as AIDS is uncertain. Generally, a person is not classified as having AIDS if they are outside a high-risk group and do not have HIV infection. In another study, Dr. Lo found his mycoplasma, with the same tissue infection and cell destruction, in 22 of the 32 patients studied.

This is not to say, and certainly Dr. Lo hasn't, that mycoplasmas *are* the cause of AIDS, but surely their discovery merits more than a scoff and a knee-jerk dismissal. It was rumored that Dr. Montagnier was so disturbed by the antagonistic response of his colleagues that he flew back to Paris early. SPIN called him for comment, but he sounded very upset and declined to discuss the situation.

Dr. Lo, who has been extremely cautious with his statements and kept a low profile for fear of being dragged into time-consuming political battles, was delighted to be joined in his research by Montagnier. The two dined together at the conference and compared observations.

SPIN: How does your mycoplasma research compare to Dr. Montagnier's?

LO: He's coming from a slightly different angle than we are. He's saying that with the mycoplasma, HIV becomes more pathogenic. I really don't know much about the interaction between mycoplasma and HIV. We still don't know the exact mechanism of HIV in AIDS. I'm not saying that HIV plays no role. I don't know. There is always the question with HIV as to why there's such a low burden of virus in patients dying of a fatal disease. But I think that another agent must be playing a very key role. I have seen patients who have very typical AIDS disease progression, but do not have HIV infection. Especially the African patients—we get a lot of referral patients from Africa and many of them have classic AIDS but no HIV.

Do you think it's conceivable that HIV alone could cause AIDS?

[laughs] That's a very political question. I don't know. At the conference, one reporter asked Dr. Montagnier, "Why don't you just stand up and admit that you've been wrong? Why don't you just admit that the entire HIV theory is crumbling?" I turned to Montagnier and said, "You'd better answer that. That's not my question." But he handled it very well. He said that HIV still plays some role, but that another agent may be playing a very key role.

When another reporter asked Dr. Montagnier if he thought it was possible that the mycoplasma was playing the major role and HIV the minor role, he said that it was an extreme possibility, but a "reasonable" one. What we are left with, in other words, is a "reasonable, extreme possibility." Well at least that's a start toward a long overdue, open debate in the scientific community about whether HIV alone is the cause of AIDS, and whether it should remain the entire object of all research.

In an attempt to get a straight answer, SPIN asked Dr. Montagnier: "Is it not now your duty to see if there is any strain of HIV that, uncontaminated by mycoplasmas, can kill T-cells?" Montagnier smiled and said, "Yes. That is what I am now trying to do, as soon as I can."

The proceedings were wrapped up by a mathematician who demonstrated with graphs why there had to be a cofactor involved in AIDS along with HIV. He did not, however, see any connection between the two and said they were "independent."

Speaking of which, self-promoting AIDS superstar Dr. Robert Gallo was so "independent" he failed to show up at all. Gallo, until recently thought to be the "codiscoverer" of HIV, had been the previous conferences' most celebrated speaker and glorified scientist. But this year something came up. When he failed to appear for a session he was scheduled to chair, the organizers, clearly irritated, announced that they hadn't heard a word from him. Finally, there was a press conference where a letter was read that Gallo had written to the program director of the conference, Robert Wechter. In the letter, Gallo explained that he, "for some time now had plans to be in Leningrad and

continued on page 87

ANTI HERO

OPINION

We already know a meat-based diet increases the risk of heart attack. HARVEY DIAMOND, best-selling author of *Fit for Life*, says it's also to blame for water pollution, deforestation, and world hunger. Here's his 10- percent solution.

Did you know that the Sahara was once a forest? It had lakes, streams, wildlife, grasslands, and forests. But humans turned it into a desert—the Sahara is a man-made side effect of food production. The trees were cut to grow grain and the land was overgrazed by livestock. It was used and abused and ultimately destroyed. After the land was denuded, the topsoil washed and blew away, leaving nothing but a perpetual wasteland. Most of the world's deserts are, in fact, man-made destructions of lush forests and woodlands. No civilization—not in Egypt, Greece, Rome, or Mexico—has ever survived the avaricious loss of its topsoil. Prior to their collapse, wars were fought—not only for wealth or ideology—but also for the control of arable land and essential resources.

The recent worldwide celebration of Earth Day helped raise the awareness of millions as to just how fragile our environment is. We are finally becoming more sensitive to the importance and precariousness of the environment. As has happened throughout the world, areas of the United States are now turning to desert. Millions of acres west of the Mississippi are suffering "severe" desertification, according to the Council on Environmental Quality. The destruction of the Central and South American rain forests is the most dire consequence of our senseless system of food production, but even in America, there will be no forests in 50 years at our present rate of deforestation. All this for the same reason that the Sahara is now a desert—because food is being grown wastefully. What we eat, and how we obtain what we eat, are two of the most important determinants of forces contributing to the environmental problems we are now experiencing.

Over the years, Americans have been subjected to a relentless barrage of pressure to consume protein. Not just any kind of protein, but specifically protein from animal products—meat, chicken, eggs, and dairy. I remember as a child in grade school those impressive, four-color charts heralding the importance of the four food groups, two of which were saturated fat—cholesterol-laden meat and dairy products. Now I discover that those charts were supplied by the National Dairy Council. Today, slick, expensively produced commercials tell us that "beef is real food for real people." What does that make people who don't eat meat—androids? The truth is, mainstream science now accepts that the more animal products one eats, the greater the likelihood of developing what are referred to as the diseases of affluence: heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. One recent study monitored by Dr. T. Colin Campbell, a nutritional biochemist at Cornell University (reported in the *New York Times* May 8, 1990), is being hailed as the most comprehensive, exacting, and well-documented study of its kind ever conducted. It leaves no doubt that our protein requirements can be amply met on a diet consisting of a minimal amount of animal products, and that catastrophic diseases increase with greater animal product consumption.

In spite of this, many people are actually fearful that if they don't eat animal products on a regular basis they will get sick from a protein deficiency. And so we Americans consume 16 million animals, 165 million eggs, and 340 million pounds of dairy products every day. The saturated fat and cholesterol contained in this quantity of animal products is precisely why, over the last two years, we have been beseeched by the U.S. Surgeon General, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Institutes of Health, the National Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society, and the American Heart Association to reduce our consumption of animal products in order to lower the occurrence of the number one cause of death in the United States: cardiovascular disease, which kills almost one million people a year. That's one death every 35 seconds.

As little sense as eating meat makes for personal health, the food group makes even less environmental sense. The chain of events that unfolds from the time an animal is born until it, or some product derived from it, winds up on your dinner plate, is one that appears to be designed specifically for the purpose of squandering our natural resources: land on which to grow the food, water to irrigate crops, and fuel to perform all the processes attendant with food production and delivery.

First, fuel. The energy requirements necessary for the production, feeding, growing, slaughtering, and transporting to market of 16 million animals every day is staggering. And the process used to accomplish this most formidable task is abysmally inefficient, especially when compared to the process used to obtain non-animal foods. The protein we derive from beef takes at least 25 times more energy to produce than a comparable amount from grain. It is as if the coal recovered in strip-mining produced only one twenty-fifth of the energy spent in producing that coal. In order to obtain one calorie of protein from feedlot beef (the source of over eighty percent of the beef consumed in the U.S.), an astonishing 78 calories of fossil fuel must be spent. Yet, one calorie of protein from wheat, corn, or beans can be produced at the cost of only three and a half calories of fossil fuel. Fattening up cows for the slaughter is a hidden potlatch. According to the calculations of economists Robin Hur and David Fields, travel by luxury car is more energy-efficient than walking powered by beef-calories.

Between the fleets of farm equipment, trucks, and tractors performing the day-to-day activities of running thousands of farms, the thousands of trucks and trains crisscrossing the country transporting livestock from farm to auction to slaughter, the fuel to supply electricity to work the pumps that irrigate hundreds of millions of acres of land, the fuel to heat in the winter and cool in the summer thousands of gigantic structures housing millions of animals, the prodigious amount of energy to supply the refrigeration and freezing for millions of tons of various animal parts, to the actual slaughtering, processing, packaging, delivery, and cooking of billions of animals, the energy requirements of the animal products industry represents a titanic, unrelenting drain on our country's energy resources.

We are also squandering water at a staggering rate to get our beef fix. It takes 100 times more water to produce a pound of meat than to produce a pound of wheat, more water is consumed by the industry supplying us with animal products than any other—so much that if its costs weren't so heavily subsidized with our tax dollars, the least expensive cut of beef at your market would be $35 a pound. In California alone, the cost of subsidizing the meat industry's thirst is $24 billion a year. As if this were not startling enough, the animal products industry pollutes more water than all other human activities combined: Trillions of pounds of excrement and more than a billion pounds of animal-feed pesticides overload the natural ecological process and ultimately find their way into our water. Fifty years ago, manure enriched the soil, but today, because animals are concentrated in vast factory farms, the excrement overwhelms the land and seeps into the water. Here is one industry responsible for the consumption of over half the water in the country and the pollution of over half of what's left.

The great waste of fuel and water pales in comparison to the astounding waste of our country's greatest and most valuable resource: the land. Plants need the nutrient-rich topsoil to grow. No soil, no food. Two hundred years ago there was an average of 21 inches of topsoil on our land, today there are 6. At our current rate, we are losing another inch every 20 years. A staggering 85 percent of the loss of our valuable topsoil is a direct result of animal agriculture. Once the topsoil is gone, it takes an average of 350 years to replace each inch of topsoil we denude. This inefficient and dangerous exploitation of our land is so mindless that it almost seems like a willful act of self-destruction.

Even more than with fuel and water, the land costs of producing meat are astronomical when compared to the land costs of producing comparable nonanimal food. Because animals eat so much, they use up 500 times more land to obtain a pound of beef than it takes

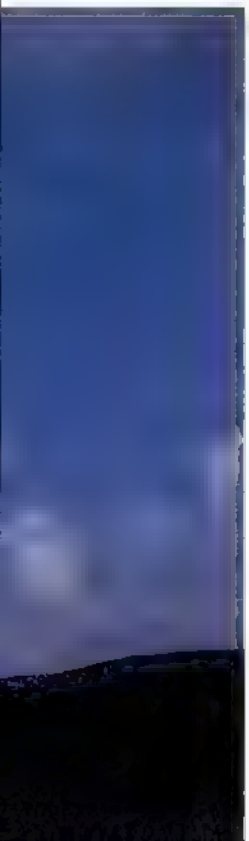
to obtain a pound of plant food. Thirty pounds of vegetation are required to produce one pound of beef. The same acre of land that yields 165 pounds of meat can yield 20,000 pounds of potatoes. We are using up our topsoil to feed animals instead of people. About two-thirds of the continental U.S. is cultivated to grow food of some kind, but only five percent of that is used to grow food for people—ninety-five percent is devoted to growing food for animals. Of course, we eat many of these animals and their products, but two-thirds of our nutrition comes from five percent of the land. The largest crop grown in the U.S. is corn. Of all corn eaten, ninety percent is eaten by animals, only ten percent by humans. Most of the oats, rye, barley, alfalfa, sorghum, and soybeans grown are also eaten by animals. When this plant food is fed to animals, we lose ninety percent of its protein value and a hundred percent of its fiber and carbohydrate value. Talk about bad investments!

Most experts in economics and agriculture understand hunger, malnutrition, and starvation as problems of distribution rather than production—even in cases of drought, the problem is not that there isn't enough food, but that it is controlled in an unjust and wasteful manner. Nowhere is this more clear than here in America, where we have children going to bed at night with empty stomachs. This is while, all over the country, livestock is being gorged to the bursting point on the very crops that could be feeding these children.

Because of our meat-based diet, we are destroying trees, polluting water, fouling the air, decimating the land, and consuming great quantities of fossil-fuel energy, and all for the purpose of supplying ourselves with a product that has been scientifically and medically proven to be a leading contributor to the number one cause of death in our country. This tolly brings us closer and closer to the day when the environment will be incapable of sustaining itself and us.

If we want to make a change, the solution is surprisingly simple. It requires practically no effort on your part, saves you energy and money, and improves your personal health. You can start making a difference at your very next meal. The destruction and waste that I've described is all because we eat animal products. All we have to do is eat less of them. In fact, if we, as a population, will eat merely ten percent less animal products—that's only two meals a week—the results would be truly impressive.

Twelve million tons of grain would be freed up—far more than enough to feed the 20 million people who will die of starvation worldwide this year.



JACK DANIELS

Aside from lessening your own chances of developing some form of cardiovascular disease, we will save 2.3 billion gallons of fossil fuel a year, or 6 million gallons a day; 1.5 trillion gallons of water, or 3 million gallons every minute; approximately half a trillion pounds of animal excrement and 100 million pounds of pesticides will not end up in our groundwater; we will save 700 million tons of topsoil, 120 million acres of land will be freed up for more judicious use, millions of trees will be left standing; and 12 million tons of grain will be freed up, which is far more than enough to feed every one of the 20 million people who die of starvation and related diseases worldwide each year. This is the result of not eating animal products at two meals each week. A rather small commitment considering the repercussions of doing nothing.

Some may think that one person's effort is so little compared to the task of what has to be accomplished that it's futile to try. To paraphrase Edmund Burke, there is no greater mistake in life than doing nothing because you could only do a little. A lot of us doing a little is a lot. The act of a vegetarian lunch and dinner one day each a week may appear to be a modest effort, but there are few simple acts as sensible and effective.

Ours is a time when we have the opportunity to help save this suffering planet. Will we be able to look back on the 90s with pride and gratitude for the foresight we had and the action we took? Or will we be forced to look back in anger and bewilderment at what we had but allowed to be lost forever? When we look back in our later years, reviewing the accomplishments of our lives, won't it be nice to know that we did what we had to do when we had to do it, to prevent turning any more forests into deserts?

If you're interested in reading more on the subject, Harvey Diamond's Your Heart, Your Planet, *will be published later this month by Hay House.*

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SPINS

EDITED BY JIM GREER

MICHAEL RICARDO

Various Artists
World Domination Or Death
Bad Taste

Iceland rocks, you know. It's very intense. Those other Scandinavian countries are like nonsense compared to Iceland. For one thing, it came into existence when the North American and European tectonic plates went crashing into each other, and now the Icelanders all brush their teeth with volcanic-ash toothpaste and heat their homes with geysers.

Furthermore, they speak a 1,000-year-old dialect of ancient Norse! The Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes (forget the Finns) all speak this watered-down, sugary version that no Viking would have been caught dead speaking, but go to Reykjavik and you'll hear the real thing. Nobody else speaks it, which is fine with them because they like to stick to themselves anyway. There are only 245,000 of them. They drink a lot, although they were not given license to brew or sell beer until this year, and I hear they're even grouchier than the Swedes, but you would be too if you couldn't even buy a beer.

Iceland is weird. Unpredictable. Eighteen years ago, for instance, it sprouted an island, just like that, straight out of the sea. You don't believe me? Ask the next Icelander you run into and he'll beam and say, "Yaa . . . Surtsey!" They named it Surtsey, see, and it's really a pretty big deal. It had the geologists going mad. All of a sudden there was this fizz in the North Atlantic two miles off the coast of Iceland. The ocean bubbled and spattered, there was a great cloud of smoke, then WHOOSH! POP! and there it was—Surtsey, out of nowhere. (Now why does new land appear in places like Iceland but never where you need it, like on the West Bank?)

Well, just like Surtsey—with a whoosh-pop and out of nowhere—came the Sugarcubes a few years ago, vaulting onto the scene with their dark sparkling weirdo-rock and next thing you know critics were talking about the Icelandic invasion. Well indeed, a new compilation of Iceland's six best bands proves there's more where the Cubes came from. Released on the Sugarcubes's own label, Bad Taste, *World Domination or Death* offers samples of pseudo-jazz, punk, speedmetal, gothic grind, and rockabilly—and for dessert a previously unreleased Sugarcubes track.

My favorite band is Reptile, a girl-boy quartet whose former keyboard player is now a Sugarcube. Reptile, who were once called *Saggoerd Sheas*, which means "they who shag sheep," sound like mental patients who accidentally came across some instruments while stumbling through an attic. It seems there is a uniquely Icelandic strain of insanity, and these guys, as one critic put it, make the Sugarcubes seem perfectly normal. The opening track, "Gun Fun," is an antsy, jazzy number with those same squeaky banshee vocals that got the Sugarcubes under our skin. The lyr

ics are deadpan and savage, all about this girl who has a friend named Scotty who she takes great delight in shooting only to resolve in the chorus that "Everything is so *fiiine*." There's a lot to be happy about here, smattering uncensored drums, a sax that slithers tight across the beat, and bass that says Dance! Go Reptile.

Bless are up next with a postpunk dark-goth song called "Nothing Ever Happens in My Head." It's good, if you can still get off listening to Goth (which the Scandinavians never seem to tire of, and who can blame them? It's dark up there, man).

Ham (good name) crack me up, for one because they're a sludge metal band with the good sense to cover an ABBA song, "Voulez Vous." It's heavy, tribal and cathartic, and the singer has this hilarious gravelly ogre voice like he eats his cereal out of somebody's cranium or something.

Bootlegs's "Thrash Attack" is pure flaming speed-punk, and even if you've outgrown stuff like that, as even the best of us do, you can just dig the fact that it's there, thoroughly uncommercial yet proudly displayed. Don't you just love Scandinavia?

The Sugarcubes track is okay. It's called "My March."

The East side of the album (first side is West) has a surprise at the end. Super swinging rockabilly à la Reykjavik, by Oxtor. Need I say more? *World Domination or Death* indeed. Iceland is go.

—Celia Farber

Harry Crews
Naked in Garden Hills
Widowspeak/Dutch East India

Author Harry Crews teaches fiction-writing classes at the University of Florida in Gainesville. One day a couple years ago a student told Harry that author/performer Lydia Lunch and Sonic Youth bassist Kim Gordon had started a band called Harry Crews. Talk about life's little surprises.

Crews is an ex-marine, a generally well-traveled, weather-beaten soul who writes some of the most gripping and truthful fiction of our time. Probably his best-known work is the 1988 novel *The Knockout Artist*, about a young, failed boxer who struggles to gain control of his life amid secret and public depravity in modern-day New Orleans. In a Harry Crews story dirt feels like dirt and people are capable of anything.

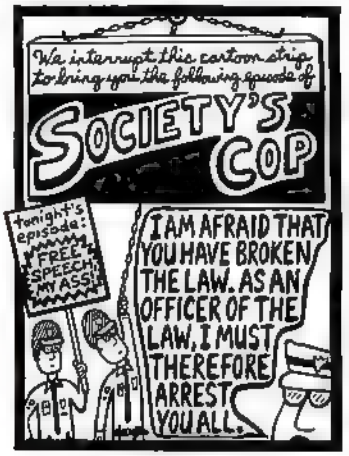
Kim Gordon and Lydia Lunch are avowed Crews fans, understandable considering that their own works don't shy away from brutality (hey, do you ever wonder what Lydia's aiming at when she shoots the gun across the hood of that car in Richard Kern's screwball comedy film *Fingered?*)

So Kim (now Im) whipped up some inbred SY bass riffs, Lyd strapped on a (don't get excited, kids) guitar equipped with a whammy bar and snare-abusing drummer Sadie Mae was recruited to ante up the band's muscle content. The trio toured Europe from September 1 - 24, 1988, during which time *Naked in Garden Hills* was recorded.

The album title and lyrics to some of the songs—notably "The Knockout Artist," "The Gospel Singer," and "Car"—are inspired by Crews's stories, though the connection is loose, a sort of Cliff's Notes/free-association combo. Once in a while the lumbering brake-shop squall of the music suggests something of Crews's stories, particularly the riff to "The Gospel Singer," which bobs like the Gospel Singer's customized black Caddie navigating the rutted roads of Enigma, Georgia. Gordon is having fun

Little Sutty's Quest For Music *by Mark Blackwell*

HEY GUYS, IT'S ABOUT TIME TO START GETTING READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL.
AW, MAN! DON'T TALK ABOUT IT!!
YEAH, FUCK THAT SHIT, MAN!
MARK BLACKWELL


We interrupt this cartoon strip to bring you the following episode of
SOCIETY'S COP
tonight's episode: FREE SPEECH, MY ASS!
I AM AFRAID THAT YOU HAVE BROKEN THE LAW. AS AN OFFICER OF THE LAW, I MUST THEREFORE ARREST YOU ALL.

(dig the cover of Youth's "(She's in a) Bad Mood"), and she and Sadie Mae mesh nicely. Lydia's comebacks to audience insults draw blood, but for the most part she's doing Lydia Lunch with the Crews theme as a serving suggestion. My opinion? The stated good intentions of the project (promoting Crews's work and reading in general) count for something, but more effort should have gone into composition and execution.

But you wanna know what the man says? Just as a preface: Harry Crews is spending the summer in Gainesville, dividing his time between the gym and an as yet untitled film script. I had a couple of classes with him; he's not the swamp creature you find portrayed in, among other places, the album liner notes. Anyway, here's what he had to say about *Naked in Garden Hills*:

"Anybody that thinks that this album in any way illuminates my work or is somehow related to my work except in instances lifted out of my books [e.g. the biographical spiel on "About the Author," taken from *The Gospel Singer*]—my reaction is that whoever thinks that, they have misread me.

"I tend to agree with my son [Byron Crews, who just got married and is a fine guitarist who favors Jimi Hendrix]. He said, 'Dad, if you listen to the album—the thing is—they're trying to wake up zombies.' They've gone beyond what I think of as music, or gone to the side of it, lashing out at everybody. . . . I like Lightnin' Hopkins, that's the kind of music I listen to. I wonder what Lightnin' would have thought of this (laughs).

"I wish [the band] well. But my feeling is, if you want to do something with your life, that's great, but don't jack around with mine."

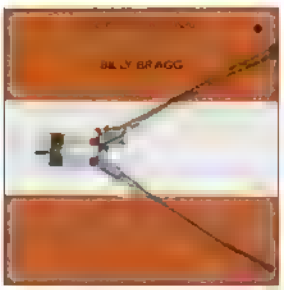
—Tom Nordlie

Billy Bragg
The Internationale
Elektra

As the Communist empire sinks irrevocably into the sunset, its populace scrambles for the leaky raft of capitalism and leaves hope for real socialism adrift—a state of affairs that has provoked British singer-songwriter Billy Bragg into making an overtly political record as a statement of defiance.

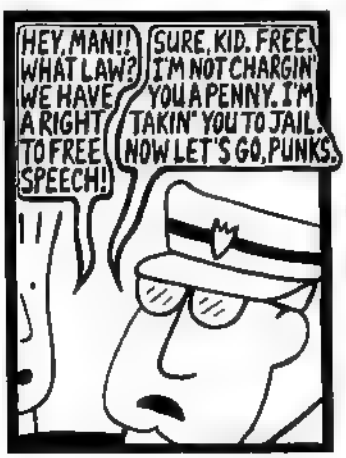
He did the same thing for 1988's presidential election with a stateside-only EP, *Help Save The Youth of America*. But where the choice of material made that record contemporary, *The Internationale*'s reliance on traditional tunes keeps it firmly rooted in the past. That is not necessarily a good thing, for in restoring the idealistic anthem "The Internationale," or reclaiming the nationalist hymn "Blake's Jerusalem," Bragg fails to inspire new visions; instead he conjures up images of political halls and frightened school choirs.

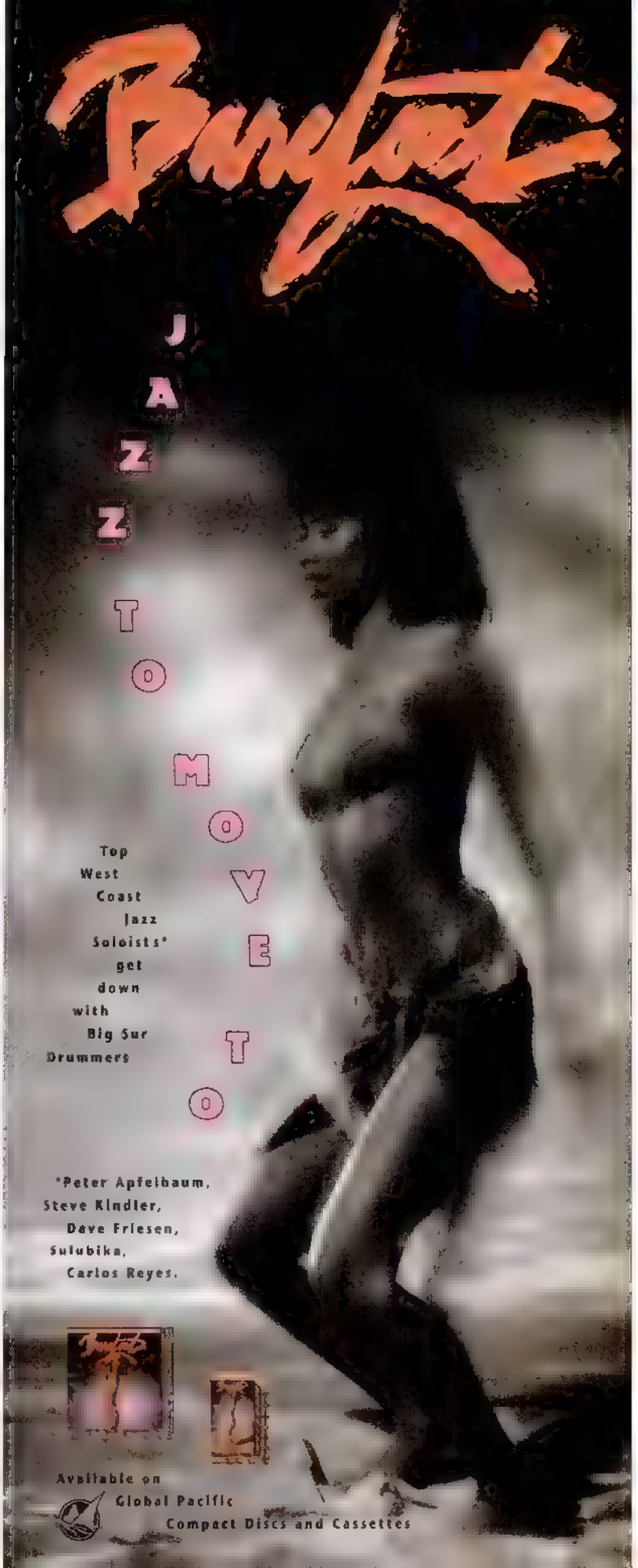
He fares better when he rejoins the 20th century, giving Eric Bogle's "My Youngest Son Came Home Today" a painfully pure rendition, and setting pertinent new lyrics to an old union song on "I Dreamed I Saw Phil Ochs Last Night." Yet sadly lacking on *The Internationale* is the voracious wit that made Billy Bragg a cult hero; it is no coincidence that the one exception, the self-penned sarcastic swipe at American imperialists, "The Marching Song of the Covert Battalions," is also the record's strongest moment.



Having strived so long to colonize the dour image of the left wing, Billy Bragg—while still a powerful performer and activist—seems with *The Internationale* to have stepped back to the gray monotone that the Eastern Bloc finally rid itself of last year. It is, I hope, only a temporary diversion.

—Tony Fletcher

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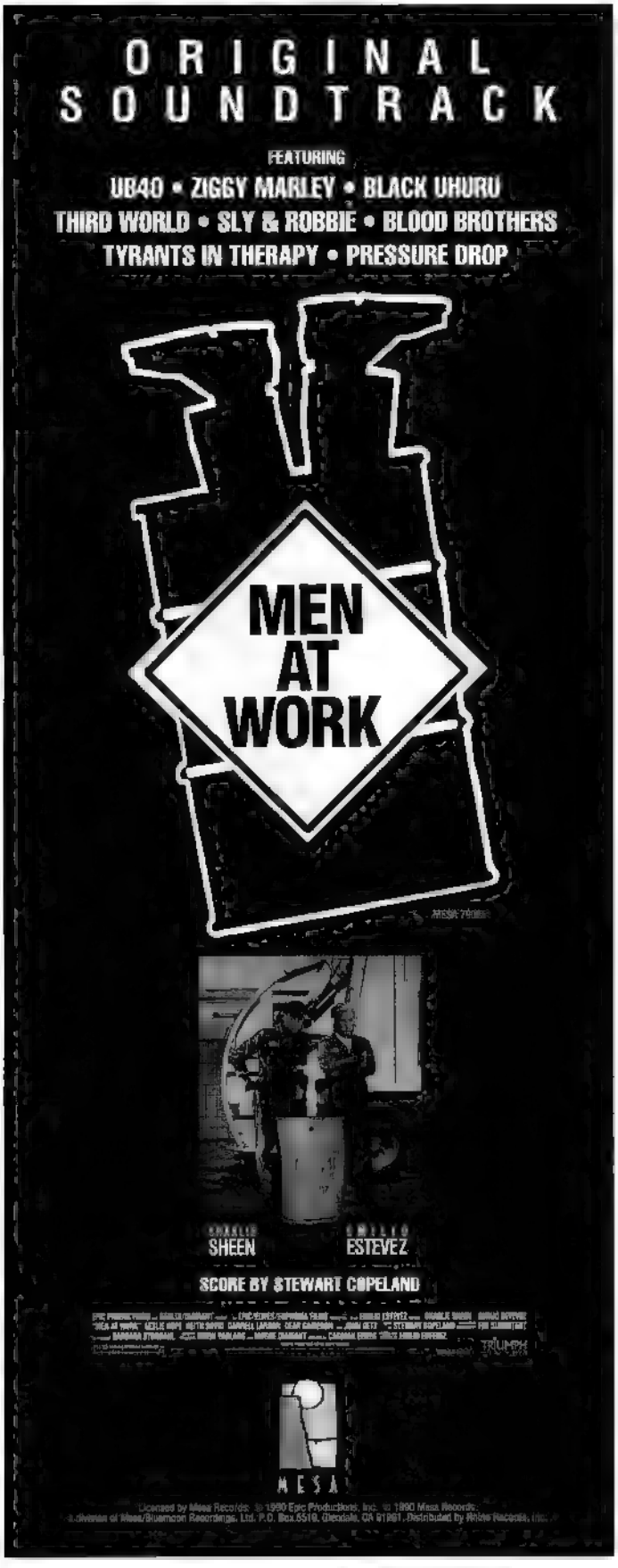

Andrew Ridgeley
Son of Albert
Columbia

In Wham!, Andrew Ridgeley did whatever it is Chris Lowe does in the Pet Shop Boys. You can't call it "looking pretty for group pictures," 'cause on the cover of *Make it Big* Andrew looks like he uses too much greasy kid stuff—on his face! His fellow Whamster was, of course, George Michael, who liked *Appetite for Destruction* but would've liked it more if Guns N' Roses didn't hide all those great beats and melodies under so many guitars. On *Son of Albert*, Andrew salvages "The Price of Love," which was originally sung by Axl Rose's (former?) father-in-law and uncle-in-law back in the 50s. But I'd like the LP more if Andrew had hid some decent beats and melodies under all those guitars.

Hey—that's the exact same thing that bugs me about the new Sonic Youth album! The main difference is that Andrew hasn't been making the same dumb record for *the last six years*, and (being less tone-deaf than SY) he rips off Chic and the Sweet instead of MX-80. And anyhow, I lied. Andrew puts *perfect* beats and melodies in several songs. Case in point: "Mexico" has the selfsame salsa-metal fever that I predicted a mere two months ago would be turning up (damn I'm good). Which is doubly appropriate 'cause nobody in Mexico ever even *heard* of salsa!

"Mexico" 's also got a girl my Lord in a flatbed Ford slowing down to take a look at Andrew, just like in "Take It Easy" by the Eagles, plus there's twisted vowel-expansion and Steve Miller train-whistle hooks. The album's first line ("Here she comes, walking down the street") is the Monkees, and "Shake (Hardcore Mix)" turns rock's trusty fuck-euphemism into aural porn. *Son of Albert* may not be as yummy as *Faith*, but it's at least as yummy as *Make it Big*, which had yum galore. It's more or less the same teen-idol-gets-hard-on move Duran Duran's Andy Taylor flubbed on *Thunder* a few years back, only harder. So stand back!

(Important caveat: The cassette's *Exile On Main Street* grime is idiotically cleaned up to INXS levels on the CD. Be frugal.)

—Chuck Eddy

Ice Cube
AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted
Priority

On his first solo album, *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted*, former N.W.A star Ice Cube calls himself "the nigger you love to hate." But actually the gangster-

rhymer is the nigger we hate to love. Indeed, cuts on N.W.A's *Straight Outta Compton* like "Gangsta Gangsta" didn't scare white people—they made us laugh. They also made us breathe a sigh of relief: Them coke-snorting, beer-guzzling bloods were as bad as we'd assumed all along.

But now that Ice Cube is on his own and recording in New York, he's in the position of trying to outdo N.W.A. To be sure, parts of *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted* measure up to the Cube's earlier work, especially the incendiary "Endangered Species" (complete with nine-millimeter gun shots) and "You Can't Fade Me," where he's humbled into thinking he got a girl pregnant. Also effective is "Once Upon a Time in the Projects," a scene which reminds him of *Good Times* and forces even the frigid Iceman to take a swig on his brew.

When he's this honest and vulnerable, and when the beats are kept at a lackadaisical L.A. pace, Ice Cube is unparalleled. But when he tries to go too fast and be too bad—to the accompaniment of a New York noise-drone patented by the Public Enemy production posse—he runs aground. On the title track, for example, he suffers from delusions of grandeur: "The poster read / Ice Cube is wanted dead." This nonsense is compounded by the album's intro, which features the Cube being sent to the electric chair. For what, his spelling of America?

—Bob Mack

John Hiatt
Stolen Moments
A&M

Don't get me wrong,– I'm delighted that John Hiatt has found true happiness as a family man. Honest I am. It's just that I *do not* want to hear any more records about it, okay? The third album

in his "domestic bliss" series, *Stolen Moments*, finds Hiatt's love-letter-to-the-family formula wearing perilously thin.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. Hiatt has been one of the most high-profile tunesmiths in the business the past few years (what other songwriter has been covered by both Iggy Pop and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band?), and after his commercial near-breakthrough in 1988 with *Slow Turning*, this record was to be the big payoff.

Instead, *Stolen Moments* is a huge disappointment. Hiatt has ditched his old band, the Goners, in favor of a cast of studio pros. But the album's perfunctory country-folk-blooze arrangements are a minor problem compared to the songwriting. Where Hiatt used to bring his autobiographical narratives to life by framing them with interesting characters (or at least decent jokes), here he turns lazy, settling for blunt first-person declarations; *Stolen Moments* is filled with the sort of icky confessional drivel Hiatt himself used to sneer at. Particularly embarrassing are the album's obvious rehashes: "Real Fine Love," which reprises 1987's "Thank You Girl"; the title track's rewrite of the same year's "Stood Up"; and "The Rest of the Dream" (operative subtitle: "Georgia Rae, Part Two").

Of course, the album isn't a total loss. "Seven Little Indians" and "One Kiss" are the sort of appealingly weird, detail-rich story-songs Hiatt used to crank out all the time, and Innocence Mission singer Karen Peris's quavering voice makes an intriguing counterpoint to Hiatt's sandpaper growl on the dreamy "Through Your Hands." Backup singers Bobby King and Willie Green, meanwhile, turn "Bring Back Your Love to Me" into a very nice soul ballad.

On *Stolen Moments*, Hiatt spends way too much time wallowing in a contentment bordering on complacency. "I couldn't dream this life I'm livin'," he warbles on the title track. So wake up already, John.

—David Menconi

Iggy Pop
Brick By Brick
Virgin

If Bonnie Raitt can do it, why not Iggy Pop? After all, *Brick By Brick* parallels *Nick Of Time* in significant ways. Besides using hip producer Don Was, both employ crack session-players (here, David Lindley, Waddy Wachtel, et al.) and, most important, both follow two decades of occasionally great music and too little recognition. So can Iggy repeat Raitt's startling leap to mass acceptance? The unlikely prospect of millions grooving to his existential boogie sure boggles the mind. Whatever happens, *Brick By Brick* offers a lively, accessible summary of Iggy's beliefs, giving new fans—lucky dogs!—plenty to ponder, while reassuring us old-timers that the fire still burns.

Anybody worried about our man be-

ing compromised should know better. David Bowie tried to polish Ig on *The Idiot* and *Blah Blah Blah*, only to spawn weird, moody mutations. *Brick*'s worst tracks underscore Iggy's inexperience in generating pure product: The gentle "Moonlight Lady" and generic raveup "My Baby Wants To Rock & Roll," written with Slash of Guns N' Roses, are too drab to be salable trash. Elsewhere, Iggy raises the issue of maintaining identity and pride in a more provocative fashion. The ripsnorting "Butt Town" and "Neon Forest" depict sleazy Los Angeles scenes, where "To be a total phony is the winning design," and where he howls, "I'm turnin' into my worst nightmare."

Don't believe it, 'cause Iggy is indomitable. Unlike Jim Morrison, who's still a crucial vocal influence, he doesn't wallow in murky mysteries of the senses. Simple self-respect is the goal, especially on "Home" with Slash's guitar and Kenny Aronoff's drums providing blazing support—and "I Won't Crap Out," a chilling, bleak ballad rendering the struggle in grandiose terms. Should the dogged pursuit of dignity suggest undue sobriety, rest assured Iggy retains a keen sense of the absurd, as the chicken clucks and manic babble of "Butt Town" eloquently prove. Whether headed for the Top Ten or the bargain bin, Iggy Pop remains a vital, crotchety necessity for those who wake in the dead of night to confront life's unanswerable questions. He's an essential rock'n'roll poet.

—Jon Young

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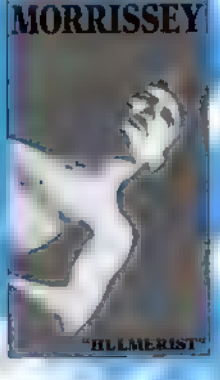
"HULMERIST"



Morrissey's first home video is an impressive 40-minute compilation featuring "Suedehead," "November Spawned A Monster" and his 1988 concert performance of "Sister I'm A Poet."

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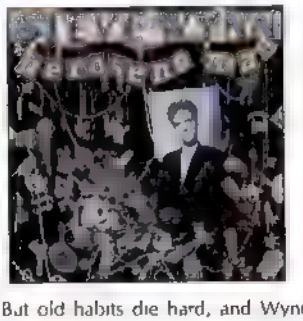
Steve Wynn
Kerosene Man
Rhino

Like fellow Los Angeleno Stan Ridgway, former Dream Syndicate honcho Steve Wynn's songs draw more from tough-guy detective fiction than contemporary pop conventions. Unpredictable and obsessive, Wynn's characters carry an unsettling edge of preoccupation. They seem most at home at either end of a knife in the back.

All Wynn's favorite assorted crazies—romantic masochists, would-be assassins, psychotic drifters—are in attendance on his solo debut, *Kerosene Man*. So are the usual suspects from Wynn's circle of L.A. pals. Members of X, the Long Ryders, Green on Red, and Los Lobos all drop in to lend support. Producer Joe Chiccarelli (coproducer of Ridgway's 1989 *Mosquitos*) uses them to add all sorts of keyboard, string, and horn flourishes, but *Kerosene Man* never degenerates into an all-star jerkoff session; the focus stays squarely on Wynn himself.

While he remains in character throughout, this is still the warmest album Wynn's ever made. He balances nastiness with sardonic humor on "Younger" (a scathing meditation on star-making machinery—this from a man on his fifth record label) and the title track, a bouncy calling card that makes about as much lyrical sense as Warren Zevon's "Werewolves of London." Wynn even shows a softer side with the I-got-you-babe sentiment of "Conspiracy of the Heart," a beautiful duet with Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano.



But old habits die hard, and Wynn spends most of this album probing humanity's darker side. By now, his voice has matured into a richly malevolent growl that nicely fits into his songs' wide-open spaces. Whether contemplating "the bright flash of light and then glory" from a random act of violence on "Anthem," or wondering just what "The Blue Drifter" is running away from, Wynn calmly draws the maximum emotive effect from every syllable. And he does it without even breaking a sweat. *Kerosene Man* is Wynn's discovery that a well-placed murmur can put someone in his place as effectively as an all-out scream.

—David Menconi

BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL

You may not know the name but you know Bernard Herrmann's work or at least some of it. Everybody knows some of it. What most people know is the music for Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960), the famous "black-and-white" score, strings only, furiously pumping, groaning, shrieking—aggressively erotic music which, after being satirically used by SCTV, ripped off by a dozen hack slasher-scorers, and sampled by the Beastie Boys, still deliciously raises the hackles. Herrmann's score was the perfect aural complement to that nasty little masterpiece, wherein sex and violence burst to the surface in evil confluence and effectively announced the end to the bluff and hearty and deeply repressed 50s.

By the time he scored *Psycho*, Herrmann already had over 20 years of highly idiosyncratic composing for movies, TV, and radio behind him. Starting in the 30s as a staff conductor for CBS, Herrmann worked on more than a thousand radio programs, and was the musical director of the *Mercury Theater*, the repertory radio playhouse centered around Orson Welles. When Welles went to Hollywood to make *Citizen Kane* (1941), Herrmann was in tow.

Kane was the auspicious beginning of Herrmann's 34-year, 48-movie career, in which he became known as the most individualistic film-music composer-arranger in the history of the medium. It is an against-all-odds distinction. Film music is, by necessity, clichéd, using tried-and-true methods to cue the viewers' emotions, and tending towards banal textures—a hide-in-plain-sight quality that doesn't draw attention to the artificiality of the conceit (like, where's that music coming from?). Herrmann didn't avoid clichés—and even managed to invent a few—but was unique in the way he colored his music, the way an otherworldly sadness hung over almost everything he wrote; not a sentimental idea of sadness but the actual thing, imbued with a vertiginously yearning feeling. Herrmann is the only film music composer whom one can often identify after hearing only a few bars.

Although his immediate post-*Kane* effort, *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, garnered Herrmann his only Oscar, his career didn't exactly take off during the

next decade. This was partly due to his singularity, which didn't lead to the ubiquity granted more functional talents, but also because, from all accounts, he was a really cranky guy; his temperamental proclivity ill-suited him for the old studio system, which required and rewarded a worker bee mentality. At any rate, he did create some exquisitely doomy scores in the 40s, including *Jane Eyre*, a cognitively dissonant fantasia for *Hangover Square*, a film about a psychopathic composer-murderer; and the sweetly sad *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*.

Throughout the early 50s, Herrmann was associated with 20th Century Fox, lending his talents to many of their glossy mediocrities, such as *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* and *Beneath the 12 Mile Reef*, the travelogue titles were intended to lure people away from the new competition: TV), as well as more memorable efforts such as Joseph L. Mankiewicz's *Five Fingers* and the seminal sci-fi cold-war allegory *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, here Herrmann's pioneering use of the Theremin—which emits a high pitched, slightly buzzy, eerily menacing sound—made it a staple of the genre.

In 1955 Herrmann began a ten-year, eight-picture relationship with Alfred Hitchcock, the centerpiece being the epochal *Psycho*. Equally celebrated was his score for Hitch's earlier film *Vertigo*, a romantic/obsessive work whose central love theme borrows freely from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, while remaining unmistakably Herrmannesque. The Hitch/Herrmann years were fruitful for both—other highlights are *North By Northwest* and the uninhibitedly anachronistic forties-style score for *Marnie*—but came to an acrimonious end over *Torn Curtain* in 1965. Hitchcock, always anxious about his commercial standing, was hoping for something in the James Brown mode, something a little hip, this was, after all, the mid-60s. Instead, Herrmann delivered a horror-show of a score, with twelve flutes massed malevolently above the abandon-all-hope sawing of eight basses, and eight cellos thrown in for leavening. Hitchcock nixed the work and never used Herrmann again.

Also during the 50s and early 60s, along with a lot of TV work, our hero scored a series of sci-fi/fantasy films, including *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, and *Mysterious Island*, and supplied appropriately rousing themes, though still with his trademark depth of expression. With Herrmann there was always another layer of meaning, so that no matter how trivial or even silly the occasion (music for giant crabs or boxy robots), an appealing seriousness of purpose was conveyed.

After the *Torn Curtain* debacle, and a couple of scores for Hitchcockophile Francois Truffaut (*Fahrenheit 451* and *The Bride Wore Black*), Herrmann virtually disappeared, his name occasionally appearing on British oddities like *Twisted Nerve* and *The Night Digger*—original scores for intriguing little films, but an ignoble fate for the erstwhile collaborator of Welles and Hitchcock.

Fortunately, Herrmann was rescued in the 70s from this undeserved obscurity by the interest of a new breed of filmmaker/cinephile. Brian DePalma used him on *Sisters* and *Obsession*, and Martin Scorsese supplied the opportunity for Herrmann's swan song, the score for *Taxi Driver*. Herrmann's timeless noirisms for that film were criticized at the time, but they seem an appropriate extension of Scorsese's highly stylized realism. Sometime during the early hours of December 24, 1975, having spent the previous day in the studio recording *Taxi Driver*'s score, Herrmann died in his sleep.

Finding Herrmann on record can be frustrating, and your best bet is to scour the bargain bins. Although Herrmann's film scores were amply recorded (even the discarded *Torn Curtain* score showed up on Warner Bros. in 1978), his work has been indifferently distributed and routinely cut out of catalogs. A lot of his stuff is floating around on obscure labels like Pye, Unicorn, and Cerberus. London released a series by Herrmann in the 70s featuring much of the Welles and Hitchcock music—often rearranged by the composer into little suites—and some of the sci-fi/fantasy material. *Taxi Driver* has shown up on Arista, *Obsession* on London. Recently, Varese Sarabande released a four-CD overview of Herrmann's career, but their distribution is so arcane that even a few phone calls to the record company didn't lead anywhere.

Meanwhile, the films are always around and the next time you catch *Psycho* or *Kane* or *Taxi*, you might want to try shifting your focus a bit toward the score, which, doubtlessly, has already invaded your consciousness to an unrealized extent. You'll be surprised what you begin to hear.

—Richard C. Walls

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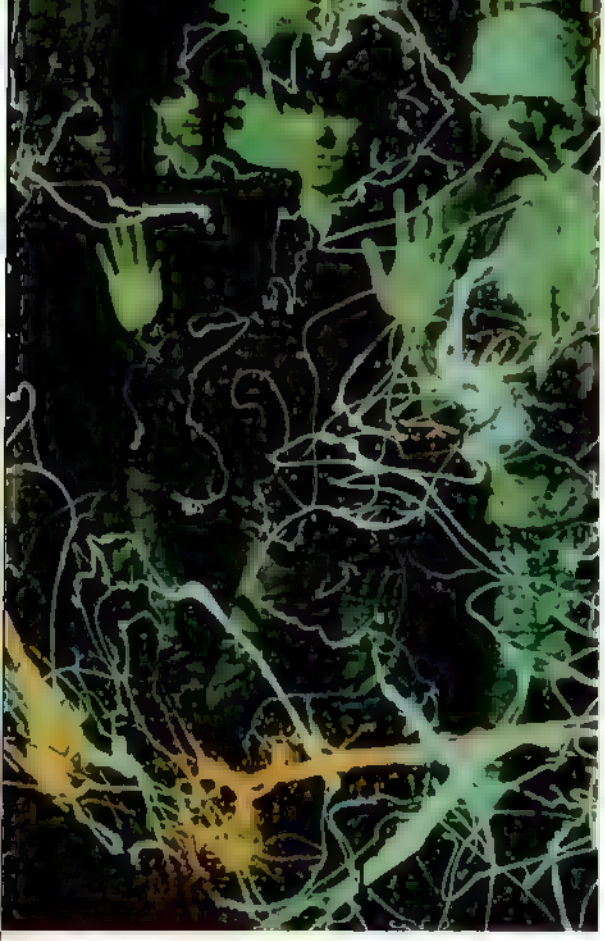

Magic Bus U.K.

(left) Stone Roses: America is wailing

(right) Happy Mondays: Northern scum or the most influential band in Britain?

SPIN correspondent STEVEN DALY returns from exile in New Jersey to his native Glasgow to find a post-acid-culture Britain in the middle of a pop revolution not seen since the days of punk. He asks his good friend JONATHAN BERNSTEIN, "What's going on here?"

SPIN: That's *damn* good coffee.
JONATHAN: You've been saying that ever since you got back into the U.K. If it's so good, how come you're not smiling?

How come everyone else *is* smiling? And why are they all wearing those floral hooded tops and those mirrored baseball caps and those baggy trousers? And why are there 30 new groups in the Top 40 every week?
Aah. You've noticed it too. This vibrant, multihued explosion of rhythm and positivity. You think there's a new optimism in the air, a feeling that anything's possible. You sense that it has all come back to the streets. You think it's just like punk?

No, I just wanted to know about those mirrored baseball caps.
I understand your confusion. You got off the plane and your city was gone. See, you're used to U.K. trends that dissolve by dusk, but not this time. Two acid Summers of Love went by and the participants didn't want the party to end. The aircraft hangars got bigger and everyone just wanted to dance.

So acid crossed over to the mainstream?
There is no acid. There is no mainstream. You're either on the bus or you're off the bus.

But who's driving the bus?
Who cares? It could be you, it could be me, it could be anyone. But if you need a point of reference, try **Black Box**'s hefty slab of Italo-disco, "Ride On Time."

The one with the mannequin mouthing words unwittingly sampled from a deserving disco diva?
Without the initial benefit of plays, promotion, a video, or even a working knowledge of the English language, it became the biggest-selling record of 1989. And après Black Box, le déluge . . . springing out of nowhere—from clubs, from the streets, from back shops, basements, and bedrooms—just like punk, the Eurocentric movement was born.

School me.
Let me put the needle to the record. [Puts needle to record.]

What are we listening to?
This, from Belgium, is **Jam Tronik**'s radical house reworking of Phil Collins's timely "Another Day in Paradise." Isn't it great? *All* the cultural barriers are down. Everything's available; they're turning mess into message.

I see. Who else do you recommend?
Candy Flip are outstanding in their field. One of the seminal records of the movement is their deconstruction of "Strawberry Fields Forever." "Anyone could do what we did," they said. "We're just two guys in a bedroom with a drum machine and a sampler."

And no ideas.
But that doesn't matter, because ideas aren't paramount here. What's important historically and culturally is that this is the first time since punk that the proletariat has seized the means of production. The hit-making mandate has been firmly yanked out of the media Magoos' hands. Radio, the press, TV, record companies—*they just don't get it*, but they're forced to trudge along in the wake of public taste.

So you're saying everything comes from the street. The kids dictate what moves and what doesn't. They even make the records. Just like punk.
Not in all cases. In an environment where, as we've said, hits can be magicked up without the aid of any of the traditional promo tools, you're going to get the odd unscrupulous opportunist. I suppose it's hard for a man to stay honest when the shop window's been kicked in.

I get it. You mean all the big names are cashing in, trying to reinvent themselves for the kids. Don't tell me, I can guess. All the usual suspects: the artistically bankrupt, flatulent, old, beached whales of rock.
No, actually, it's the indie bands: **Primal Scream**, **Jesus Jones**, **My Bloody Valentine**, the **Soup Dragons**, the **Beloved**, the **Shamen**, the **Farm**, et al. Radical, uncompromising college radio samples all of them. And all of them make the simultaneous discovery that it's time for that natural progression towards samples. The ever-popular "Funky Drummer" backbeat and floral hooded tops. Thankfully, in a live situation, most of these groups retain their raw, unfettered energy.

And the new fans leave in droves.
Yup. There's only really two groups who wouldn't be left shuffling uncomfortably when confronted by Before-and-After photos. The **Happy Mondays** spent most of the previous decade out of their heads. They've not only seen the times come into step with them, they've inspired an entire generation of dance bands who make music you can't really dance to. **The High**, **Flowered Up**, **World of Twist**, **Five Thirty**, and **Eusebio**, to name just a few groups. But the one group carried along the fastest by this wave are the **Stone Roses**, whose lead singer, Ian Brown, is probably the only player in this vast scenario who stands the slightest chance of joining Robert Smith on the bedroom walls of middle-American postmodern MTV-ers who think *they're* the only ones who *really* understand him. I don't think white folks in America feel the same need to dance as we do. They can go for rap because it's kinda gross, but Britain's new soundtrack doesn't conform to any recognizable formats. The drugs, maybe. Ecstasy is the Krazy Glue holding the entire movement together. But as for the fashions . . . [ruefully shakes head]

ALEX CUMMINS

In terms of the big picture, I sense that these tremors are confined to a singles chart widely regarded as condemned property. This unexpected but wholly stimulating convulsion might bring a smile to your local haberdasher, but it won't write a new amendment in the constitution of rock.
So what. You're either on the bus or off the bus. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. You can't stop what started in the street. It's just like

Punk all over again? Only without the aggression?
Absolutely.

Or the irony?
Yeah.

Or the individualism?
Yes, yes.

In fact, it's nothing like punk at all.
That's why everyone's smiling.

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WORLD BEAT!

Column by Richard Gehr

For a memorable romantic evening, Haitian style, why not treat your obscure object of desire to dinner and dancing at Senegal Manor in Brooklyn's Flatbush neighborhood? The vibes are as piquant as the cuisine served by this faux-Parisian hot spot, especially when the lights dim to Oh! Baby, the *compas* band dips into a slinky groove, and couples cozy up on the dance floor. Ooh la la!

I expected this passion pit to heat up even more than usual late last Memorial Day when Loketo, the Congo's foremost ambassadors of soukous, hit the stage. No dice. The skeptical Haitian audience refused to give it up for this rapid-fire ecstasy machine. Querle surprise! Things perked up only when charismatic singer Aurlus Mabélé involved the audience in some lascivious horseplay with the group's two lovely female dancers. But the lights remained on, as though we were at a concert rather than a "jump up." The strange performance ended with speeches testifying to the unity of all blacks—especially those who spoke French.

Their reception may well have taken these Paris-based stars back to 1986, when Aurlus formed Loketo ("hips" in Lingala, the tongue invented by the Belgians to expedite the exploitation of workers in the Congo) with guitar alchemist Diblo Dabala. With Aurlus's sweet tenor voice the group's heart, and Diblo's silvery, circular runs its soul, Loketo is second to none in terms of irresistible dance-floor velocity. Their streamlined soukous (from *secouer*, to shake) skipped the slow rumba that had introduced the speedier *seben* section when the transformed rumba rhythm first swept mid-sixties Kinshasa, Zaire.

"When Loketo started," Aurlus recalls for me through a translator, "a lot of Africans used to the old style didn't like it. They called it 'football' because it reminded them of when the coach blows the whistle and the players take off real fast. Now everyone wants it like that."

For all its up-tempo sparkle and verve, soukous still draws heavily on "le folklore" of Zaire and the Congo. Mabélé weaves folk songs into his lyrics, which he sings either in Lingala, French, or the Creole patois heard in the Antilles. Likewise, Diblo's heavenly guitar patterns rework folk rhythms that originated with the likembe (hand piano) and lute, hit the streets with the box guitar, and blossomed in the electric virtuosity of Prince Nico, Franco, and Tabu Ley. Embracing Africa's traditional rhythmic democracy, Loketo's complexly meshed double guitars and bass draw power from Mack Macaire's driving kick drum and scatting snare.

As much about style and sound, soukous is the music of *les sapeurs*, the African followers of SAPE: *Société des Ambienceurs et des Personnes Élégantes*. "If you want to be a *sapeur*," Aurlus knowingly confides, "you cannot smoke the herb, steal, or fight in clubs." *Sapeurs* also take enormous pride in their personal appearance. "You have to know how to mix colors when you dress," says Aurlus, who had his own *grille*—or personal line of clothing—before devoting himself to music full time. Label flashing can be an integral part of dance-floor behavior, and Aurlus suggests Gaultier, Yamamoto, and Versace as acceptable *grille* alternatives.

Soukous also serves as a vehicle for personalized dance fever, with musicians latching onto trendy street moves and thrusting them into the public eye. Kanda Bongo Man, for example, appropriated the hip-rotating *kwassa-kwassa* created by Zairan auto mechanics. Other groups exploit the *mandiba*'s side-to-side movements to the butt-churning *soundama*. Loketo recently introduced the trancelike *peve*, which Aurlus embellishes with his signature prattails. Still, as Tabu Ley once noted, "Every time you dance the rumba badly, you've got a new dance."

As with Ley and so many other African artists, it took Parisian success to valorize Loketo in the eyes of the folks back home. Today, however, Diblo tells of playing to crowds of 50,000 or more in his native Kinshasa, where the group is too popular to walk the streets unmolested. African audiences are remarkably strict about their music, according to Diblo, barely tolerating mistakes or diversions from the familiar and expected. This aspect of soukous gives the music a certain disclike uniformity, its only weakness.

On Loketo's albums—such as *Soukous Trouble* (Shanachie) and the upcoming *Explosion* (Jimmy's Production)—the group gussies up its sweet chanted vocals and complex polyrhythms with squiggly synthesizer lines from zoukster Ronald Rubinel. Even on their solo albums, such as Diblo's new *Mondo Ry* and Aurlus's *Soukous la Terreur* (Jimmy's), the two rarely diverge from their tried-and-true formulas (Diblo scores a couple of notches jazzier on his).

But while zouk's flashy beats appear destined for lambadaland, soukous has legs. Loketo's sweaty tours through America's clubland could well put this utopic Afrodisco thump over with the teeming masses. As many other raucous multiethnic shows have proved, Cenegal Manor's bemused audience was an aberration. Everywhere else, soukous means never having to say you're tired.

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Wonderful World

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Los Pinguinos/Fred Zimmerle: *Conjuntos Nortenos* (Arhoolie)

George Mgrdichian Ensemble: *One Man's Passion* (Shanachie)

Fuse—World Dance Music (4th & Broadway)

Huayno Music of Peru—Vol. 1 (1940-1989) (Arhoolie)

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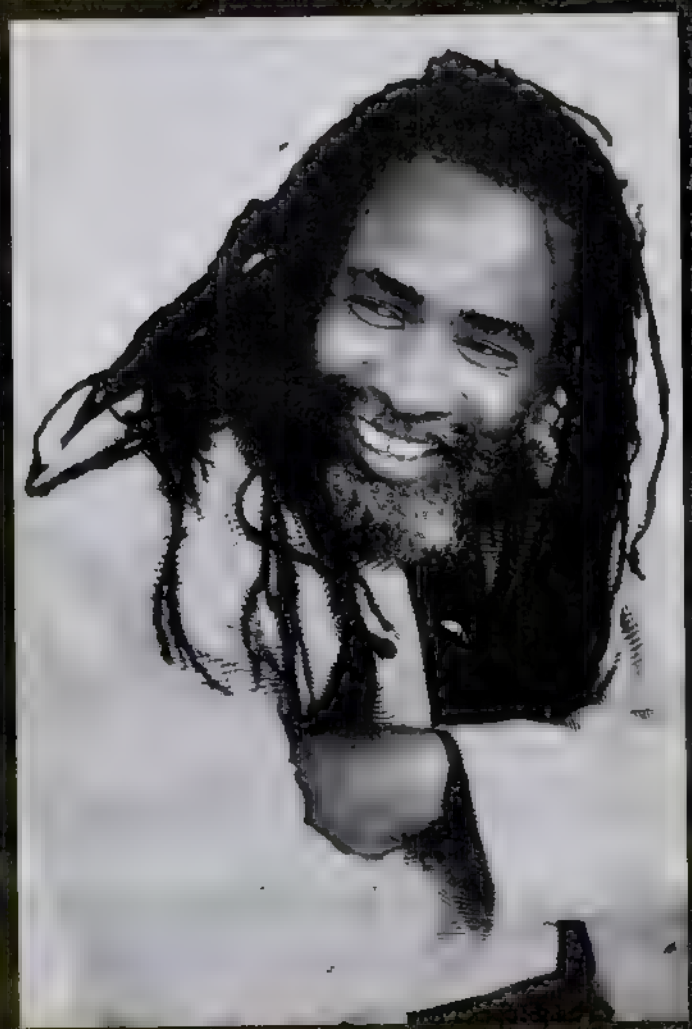

LOOK FOR MARGARETH MENEZES AND BURNING SPEAR ON TOUR THIS SUMMER

MANGO RECORDS™ AN ISLAND RECORDS INC. COMPANY

by Byron Coley

appy day to ya, pals. Been thinking about mowing the lawn today? Well, fook. Why don't you delay that thought, pull up a cool drink, and have a seat in the shade. Comfy?

It's tempting, from my crow's nest atop West Somerville's famous Ivory Tower, to describe an entire country's musical personality in a couple of ill-chosen words. It seems easy to generalize from the safe distance of a few thousand miles, but it's a dumb thing to do, and every once in a while I remember to cut it out. The abundant differentiations of Japanese noise was brought home this month by a few disparate releases that caught my eye one day. They're no more alike than tinkers and nickels.

First is **Unita Minima**'s *The Edge Of The World* LP (Bad Alchemy, Franz Ludwig Str. 11, D-8700, Wurzburg, W. Germany). Performed by two women playing mostly light percussives and keys, Unita Minima's music is sparse, possessed of a weightless quality that allows it to enter your bean like the memory of mist. You could tape this record, play it on a blaster while riding horseback through a lake of fire, and I doubt the pony would bolt. It's real nice.

Of a wildly divergent nature is the new LP by **Hanatarash**, *3* (RRRecords, 151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852). A male duo, Hanatarash are committed to biting big holes in the sonic structure of the universe, then corking these gaps with oversized vibrating butt-plugs. The result is a mind-blending assemblage of post-rock crank action. There are portions of *3* that sound like *Confusion*-era Sonic Youth crushed inside the shell of a small, flaming Toyota and trying to saw their way out. But it's even "better" than that, if you know what I mean.

Even more overboard (if that's possible) are moments of the first three 7-inchers released by Public Bath Records (P.O. Box 2134, Madison, WI 53701). There's one by the **Boredoms** (the most screeching, dissonant, and unstructured "rock" band on the planet), a comp called *Japan Bashing Vol. 1* that's filled with tracks by the Boredoms' extended family, and one by **Sekiri** (a gal punk band who're crammed up tight and brimming with "Ughs"). So anyway, those are five records that could've come from at least a couple of different star clusters. But they're all from the same little island. Go figure!

Mention Spain to a *jimoke* and his or her head will fill with visions of lace-turbaned dollies doing some fancy spinning while maracas chatter in the distance. Mention Spain to a *true* hepster and they'll think of a country recently freed from the shackles of fascism, determined to enjoy some serious cultural freedom. And if you'd care to share in some of this freedom, from the comfort of your own divan . . why, doing so is as easy as falling off your ass.

There are at least a couple of variant strains of rock-based Spanish hoot that have come to my attention recently. The first is trad-blast garage-rock putzery, heavily weighted toward U.S.-style root-grunge expressionism. An excellent sample of this can be had on a comp LP entitled *Munster Dance Hall Favorites Vol. 2* (Munster, P.O. Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, Spain). The material ranges from La Granja's straight take of the MC5's kingly teen-pop anthem "High School," through "Black Blood Nightmare I" by Los Bichos (who mix balls of Nick Cave's hair with the psychly basics). None of the bands may tell you much about the unique aspects of Spanish culture, but they sound really fine. What's more, the company that put together the comp also released a lot of other great stuff, including an amazing fanzine about Australian lug-merchants, the *Scientists*, that includes a truly scorched live single. Write 'em at the above address (be sure to include two IRC's—available at your local post office) and get the heck into it.

And while I'm on the subject, allow me to also suggest a great Spanish rock 'n' roll mag called *Ruta 66* (c/o Anbau, 282-284, 08006 Barcelona, Spain). The writing's in Spanish, but the format and lay-out are easy on the eyes and they cover all sorts of trash culture in a highly pictorial way.

On the other side of the fence are the recent recordings I've heard by Spanish bands who seem to manifest some of the same cerebral density offered by New York's No Wave outfits. The most interesting of these combos to grace my turntable thus far are **Macromassa**. Their LP, *Espejo Rapidismo* (Esplendor Geometrica, Apartado 14325, 28080 Madrid, Spain) is full of all sorts of cool, weird currents. Voices and percussion team up with truly fucked-sounding guitar, sax, and clarinet for a down-sliding, screwball tumble through a landscape like no other. The bands share elements with some of the more loosely-wound heroes of England's D.I.Y. rebellion of the early 80s (Normil Hawaiians, Good Missionaries, Take It, etc.), but there's lots more going on, too. Some of it hops like a crippled donkey raised to the strains of the Theoretical Girls' "U.S. Millie," other bits sound like nothing other than the brown star of Franco's Spain crumbling in on itself. They've a whole bunch of sounds up their sleeves and if you don't enjoy at least a few you're a stupe.

A lot of the Finnish stuff that's arrived lately has been R-O-C-K in a disappointingly mannered style. Although Finland was the source of some of the 80s' most idiotically maximal hardcore-related puke, too many of the old guard now content themselves with mere head-shaking. Luckily, all is not lost. You can still count on Electric Blue Peggy Sue to deliver some goods, and now there's also **Psychoplasma**. On their debut LP, *Radio Flies* (Ga Ga Goodies, P.O. Box 361, 00121 Helsinki, Finland), they come across like a plateful of red hot pennies. The vocalist, Otra, makes a few throat gestures that seem disgruntlingly indebted to Jello Biafra, but more often his singerly *emotage* recalls Death of Samantha's John Petkovic. Now that you mention it, I guess it could be said that Psychoplasm resemble a smaller, punkier version of the aforementioned Cleveland hot shots. You'd have to substitute Blue Oyster Cult for Roxy Music in the band's portfolio of references, but they both have the same appreciation of power-dynamics. And they know how to write tunes that stick to your face like butter patties. Fine!

Naturally enough, back in the States things are pretty fine as well. **Miracle Room** (not to be confused with the odious Miracle Legion) are a trio from Austin, Texas who moved to New York a while back and have clanged the hell outta more air than you'll breathe in a lifetime. The *aggro* of their guitar textures may give you the impression that they're working in the scum rock tradition, but their use of trance-inducing percussives and layered drones gives their eponymous debut EP (Bar None Records) a sound almost like something on the German Pilz or Brain labels from the early 70s. Their first studio release doesn't crunch quite as mightily as the band does in live performance, but the four tunes will surge up and down your temples like a one-pint blob of bad blood on the warpath. The effect is real untedious.

Washington, D.C.'s Teenbeat label (P.O. Box 50255, Washington, D.C. 20004) has been the home to many low-balling oddities over the years—Unrest, Vomit Launch, Scaley Andrew, etc.—but one of their finest, sweetest dunt-pop things is the self-titled LP by **Johnny Cohen's Love Machine**. About this band I know less than nothing. Maybe they are from D.C., maybe they're not. Regardless of their home base, Cohen & Co. sound like masters of marginally singerish knowledge of a very friendly variety. And now that Ronald House is no longer the philosopher-king of Great Plains, the existence of just-this-sorta-shit is especially important. Over sets of firm garage-punk sound waves, Mr. Cohen displays the kind of riveting charm that keeps Cal Johnson's head sitting up straight on his neck. Some claim that the King of Wince (Jon Richman) is an influence on Cohen, but you can't make a silk hat out of a pig's testicle no matter how hard you sew. And Cohen doesn't sound like he's sewing all that hard. But hey, if you wrote songs as good as "Chessmaster From Hell" and "Escape From the Planet Of the Apes," you'd be able to take it easy too. And relaxing on a hammock is the exact correct way to listen to this album. So c'mon, lie down!

The Best Package of the Young Decade Award has gotta go to **Prisonshake** and their *I'm Really Fucked Now* set (Scat, P.O. Box 141161, Cleveland, OH 44114) which includes a CD, an LP, a cassette, a single, and a booklet by these straight-up, right-thinking, Midwestern ball-busters. The CD presents a working version of a forthcoming double-LP and I don't have the technology to listen to it right now, but there's still plenty of other stuff to stick my head in. The album collects a selection of hits from the band's now-rare 45's—including new vocals and newly untangled mixes in a few instances—and these tunes hit as hard as peanuts dropped from the space shuttle. Robert Griffin's stinging guitar work collects itself around tenets of centrist riffery, mid-body power-slams, and general "inside" greatness. All kinds of minor majesties pop their heads up in and around his sound, glisten for a moment, then disappear in the chug of the stew. Doug Enkler's manly vocals and the rhythm section's solid front combine with this for some truly haunting moments that make the rancid *pro forma* "rock" going around seem even more pathetic than usual. The album teems with proof that you don't have to be weird to be great. The cassette collects outtakes, demos, and scungier droppings, so it's only about as intrinsically interesting as the leftover's from Ric Menck's *Groovy Strum* comp must be. Taken with the album, however, the tape adds ass-width and heft galore. Very nice additions, I'm sure you'll agree. The 45 is a collaboration with My Dad Is Dead that shudders at the end of tense guitar strings and plows up some real fertile vocal turf. And if that's not enough, be sure to ask Scat about *Seven*, a magazine they put out dedicated to singles reviews. The first couple of issues have shown a lot of promise and the packaging is worth seeing.

As a public-service note, Roger Kummert of 44 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217, has asked me to tell you that he is starting a newsletter called *Scratch*, specifically for people recording and releasing their own cassettes. He's not interested in professional studio demos, but all do-it-yourselfers should bother him from now on. Thanks.

I'm all out of love beads but still enjoy receiving nude pix and records at P.O. Box 301, W. Somerville, MA 02144.

Dan Quayle

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going to roll over and legalize it."

Mark Helmke says that reporters were going after the wrong story. "What's intriguing about Dan Quayle was his openness to discussion. He had a very open mind about a lot of ideas. He is an interesting person to be with in a private social setting when he doesn't have to be armed for combat."

Helmke's original story in the *Fort Wayne News Sentinel* indicates that the Vice President is capable of intelligent and original reflection. Quayle defended a slightly unorthodox policy position on the country's most popular illicit drug. Sometime in the next 13 years, his thinking changed and he adopted a completely different position. So what happens when the Vice President demonstrates he is not a right-wing ideologue nor a dim bulb? The national press corps ignore the story and all the Vice President's men deny it. You would think these people were on drugs.

AIDS

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Moscow in connection with a leukemia meeting in Germany, in part because of a recent meeting with President Gorbachev during his visit to Washington." He assured that he would also be giving lectures on HIV while there. "Given the opportunity," the letter went on, "to open new contacts with Soviet scientists, fostered by *perestroika* and the potential need for help with AIDS in Eastern Europe, I feel I must make this commitment. Unfortunately, this will require a longer stay than I had planned and I will not be able to be with you. It is important to me that my absence will not be misinterpreted or regarded in any way other than my commitment to improving international and scientific relationships towards those goals we all share."

Misinterpreted? Could he possibly be referring to the fact that he is currently the target of a federal criminal investigation into whether he, in fact, fraudulently stole credit for the discovery of HIV from Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute? (*See* "Words From the Front," Feb. '90; oh hell, why don't you just read this column every month?) *Science* magazine just devoted 15 pages to the accusations, following a mammoth expose in the *Chicago Tribune* last year on Gallo's scientific ethics—or rather lack of. In any case, he wasn't exactly missed. Jay Levy, when asked what he thought of Gallo's no-show, said, "The atmosphere is vastly improved around here without Gallo and his cronies following him around. Scientists and doctors are able to communicate in a far more relaxed manner than ever before."

Also absent was our very own President Bush, who chose instead to attend a fundraiser for Jesse Helms, which just about says it all.

Also absent, in addition to the countries that boycotted because of our HIV testing policies, was our very own President George Bush, who chose instead to attend a fundraiser for Jesse Helms, which just about says it all. This was the second time a U.S. president (Reagan was the first) has broken the tradition of the head of state attending and inaugurating the International AIDS Conference. But come to think of it, we don't suppose he was terribly missed either.

Across the street from the main conference, another was being held; this one, called the Advanced Immune Discoveries Symposium, focused on alternative AIDS therapies and explored some ideas that were censored from the main conference agenda. The number one attraction was Dr. Kenneth Alonso of the Atlanta Hospital, who gave a talk on his controversial "hyperthermia" treatment, first performed last February by removing a patient's blood and heating it to 42 degrees centigrade. Alonso has since treated a second patient who is doing well—his white-cell count restored and his tumors shrinking. Alonso seemed furious that his paper was among the 1,800 turned down for the main conference. He was asked about a poster hanging at the conference across the street written by a researcher in the lab of Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which reported that heat revved up the replication of HIV and made it more active. To this Alonso said he "didn't want to accuse anyone of lying," but they had not asked him about his procedure.

One hyperthermia sceptic outside the establishment camp is Dr. Joseph Sonnabend, one of the founders of the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR), and the *Journal of AIDS*. Dr. Sonnabend has never believed HIV is the

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3 UNO—RUBEN BLADES (ELEKTRA)
4 PASSION SOURCES—VARIOUS (REAL WORLD)
5 WORLD BEAT—KAOMA (CBS)
6 PAMBERU—THE BHUNDU BOYS (MANGO)
7 KONBIT! BURNING RHYTHMS OF HAITI—VARIOUS (A & M)
8 TWO WORLDS ONE HEART LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO (WARNER BROS.)
9 PUTA'S FEVER—MANO NEGRA (VIRGIN)
10 M'LAH—LES NEGRESSES VERTES (SIRE)
11 BEASTS OF NO NATION—FELA ANIKULAPO KUTI (SHANACHIE)
12 VOLUME TWO—LE MYSTERE DES VOIX BULGARES (NONESUCH)
13 NOW!—BLACK UHURU (MESA)
14 PARIS SOWETO—MAHLATINI & THE MAHOTELLA QUEENS (POLYDOR)
15 "SAY WHAT?" DOUBLE ENTENDRE SOCA MUSIC FROM TRINIDAD—VARIOUS (ROUNDER)
16 O SAMBA BRAZIL CLASSICS II—VARIOUS (SIRE)
17 SALAM—TOURE KUNDA (TREMA)
18 TIME WILL TELL—BUNNY WAILER (SHANACHIE)
19 CALYPSO SEASON—VARIOUS (ROUNDER)
20 SHAHEN SHAH—NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN (REAL WORLD)

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AIDS

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sole cause of AIDS. He listened to Alonso's talk, but came away saying that the method described made him think Alonso "has no idea what he is doing." Asked whether the treatment might cause brain damage, Alonso said, "You would have to say there is a possibility, but we don't see it in either patient. But we are collecting data."

Perhaps the most surprising presentation at the symposium was Milan Pesic's, a German clinician who showed photographs of patients in Kinshasa in extreme states of wasting and with large ulcerated patches of Kaposi's sarcoma who, after treatment with thymus hormone extracted from calf thymus, recovered well enough to go home looking normal. Pesic, who also treats patients in Germany and Montreal, claims that his treatment yields survival rates in AIDS three times better than usual. He has 23 patients in Montreal and several hundred in Kinshasa. Pesic, who adds "nutritional and environmental improvements" to his treatments, says he believes HIV is probably an opportunistic infection rather than the cause of AIDS, which in his opinion is "an exhaustion of the immune system." Pesic did not, however, offer published papers to back up his claims.

Meanwhile, the main juggernaut rolled on without notice of any disagreement or dispute. Outside on a grassy knoll, AZT critic John Lauritsen held a press conference at the side of the Moscone Center entrance, handing out copies of his new book, *Poison by Prescription: The AZT Story*. Lauritsen repeated his belief that AZT is a dangerously toxic drug that was approved by the FDA on the basis of "fraudulent" research studies, and that there is "no credible scientific evidence" that AZT has benefits of any kind. Of the 750 reporters present, 8 came to listen to Lauritsen. Inside the mammoth convention building, however, among the 100 corporations with a booth, was Burroughs Wellcome, the maker of AZT. They handed out glossy brochures and hundreds of shiny reprints from the *New England Journal of Medicine* of the same studies that Lauritsen discredits.

It seemed telling that the only time ACT UP finally managed to disrupt the even tenor of the conference was at the closing session, when Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan was drowned out by a pandemonium of whistle-blowing, jumping, and chanting that went on throughout his speech. Anthony Fauci's review of "AIDS Research: Considerations for the 90s" was received in respectful silence, however, and activists showed no reaction as Fauci told the vast football field-sized auditorium that "it is particularly unfair when certain scientists are singled out and called scoundrels."

Indeed Dr. Fauci. It *is* unfair when certain scientists are ridiculed and chastised, as Fauci and others in charge of AIDS research have repeatedly done to those who have raised perfectly valid questions about the increasingly questionable HIV hypothesis. How much longer can this critical debate, upon which so many human lives depend, remain shut? Any longer is too long, but at least it may not be that much longer now.

Billy Idol

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Myself." I remember I went to Hurrah one night and I was just standing at the bar, and the bar was really crowded, and then suddenly the D.J. slammed on "Dancing With Myself" and the whole place jumped up, knocking over everything to get to the dance floor. So I thought, I've definitely done the right thing moving to New York.

"The only problem with America was that the radio stations really didn't want to play punk rock. When my first solo album came out and we put out the single "Hot in the City," we didn't put my picture on it. And it got to number 23 on the charts. But with "White Wedding" my picture was on the cover again, and they wouldn't play it. So the record company wanted me to change names and change my image. They were showing me pictures of Rick Springfield and saying 'Maybe that's what you should be like.' I said, 'What's going on! I've spent the last five years being Billy Fucking Idol, I'm not gonna change now!"

"They were trying to make me palatable to the America of 1981, so of course I did my hair even more spikier. So it was through MTV playing the "White Wedding" video that people started to hear my music. The great thing about MTV for me was that it broke that stranglehold. If it hadn't been for MTV, it would never have forced those jaded, bored assholes at the radio stations to play my music. It did that for a lot of bands. MTV is like a double edged blade, in one way it helped make me, and another way it's sort of. . . ."

With the help of MTV, Billy Idol was by 1984 the only rock star to have three albums on the charts at the same time and for over 50 weeks. Platinum became a big word in his vocabulary; he was nominated for Grammys; he could afford the best cocaine; he had more women than ever wanting to grab his joint, everything seemed possible. But if you listen to the lyrics of "Trouble With The Sweet Stuff": "Don't wanna give it up / gotta give it up / don't wanna give it up," you can hear Billy's love affair with the night getting the better of him.

On the way to the bathroom at Club Spice, after delivering two songs for the crowd—one, with new guitar virtuoso Mark Younger-Smith, a killer version of "Rebel Yell," just to let everyone know he's still got it—Billy ran into an old friend, a famous comedian who offered him some coke.

"No thanks, no thanks, I don't wanna do any," Billy said, trying to keep it light.

"What's the matter, you too good to do it with me anymore?" said the comedian, wounded as if someone had just flushed his guppies.

"No, it's not that, I'm just pleasantly drunk and want to stay that way, okay."

I lived for seven years in the center of Manhattan and only used to leave it to get on an airplane, I never went to the Hamptons or anywhere else. And then Cuomo came in, or whoever, and started shutting down all the interesting after-hours clubs and all the fun was gone. They ruined the whole social cross-pollenization—where you had artists and the intelligentsia standing next to the black drug dealer who was wacking everybody up in the toilets.

"What else made me leave was that I got to the end of my musical life in New York. I knew Steve Stevens was gonna go off and do his solo stuff. I knew that right from the beginning of *Whiplash Smile* that eventually he was gonna go off and do his own band. So I knew that I was going to have to find new people

to play with and I felt I'd already played with the best people in Manhattan. In L.A. there were still people who believed that rock'n'roll was still great.

"I also liked what was going on in the metal scene in L.A. with Mötley Crüe, Guns N' Roses, and everybody like that. At least Guns N' Roses have the balls to be who they want. They're not sitting around worrying, 'Oh, are we gonna sell fewer records because we talk about heroin and all?'

"I hung out with Axl one night. At the time Guns N' Roses were going through this whole thing about whether or not they were gonna stay together. I felt like an old man saying,'No, keep your band together, baby. Don't blow it now, man. It's probably the best thing you're ever gonna remember. You don't remember the stupid arguments . . . '

"But by the time I got out to L.A. I had this horrendous pain underneath my shoulder blades. My energy level had dropped off quite a bit as a result of ten years of boozing and roving and sleeping in the back of vans and fuck knows where. Every time I tried to play my guitar I had these really terrible pains because my body was so weak, so I had to ask the question, 'Do I want to slide into middle age gracefully and give it all up, or do I want to keep on rocking?' I finally realized I had to do something to put some energy back into my body. I hated the idea of working out, but I can't be the person I want to unless I work out. And if I didn't do it, I wouldn't be here.

"When I first came out here I got my Harley-Davidson. It was November 11, 1988, the day that "Mony Mony" went to Number One and I thought buying my Harley-Davidson was a great way to commemorate it. I never had a bike in England. I never had the money. I always had the clothes, but I never had the money. I'm glad I had started working out because a Harley-Davidson is like 700 pounds, and if you drop your bike and can't pick it up, you know you're a bit of an asshole. I was glad I was working out because then I could pick up a 700-pound bike off the ground. It's what saved my leg as well.

"I really didn't have time to think about whether or not I was going to die. It was all pretty quick, the next thing I knew I was lying in the gutter, coming to. The first thing I thought was, 'I can think.'

"I wasn't wearing a helmet. I heard this massive bang when I got hit, and everybody says if you hear the bang you're alright.

"Then I started to realize my arm was killing me and my leg was hurting. It was pretty heavy. I've had five operations—skin grafts, replacing the bone, plastic surgery.

"See, I don't think you have to grow up. I think you have to grow into yourself, but if I grew up I'd stop being me, and I wouldn't be good to anybody."

"At first they thought they would have to amputate it. They probably would have if I hadn't been working out because the fact that I had developed muscles in my legs saved me.

"So I'll be back on the bike soon. I still like all the danger and unexpectedness that comes with riding a motorcycle, just like in rock'n'roll. See, I don't think you have to grow up. I think you have to grow into yourself, but if I grew up I'd stop being me, and I wouldn't be good to anybody.

"My life is not so much 'How am I going to top myself?' but 'How am I going to feel new?' I never wanted to be home with the pipe and slippers and the arm chair. I want my life to have the feeling that everything's up in the air sometimes. I was with my last girlfriend for nine years and the great thing that cemented my relationship with her was having my son, little Willy Wolf. We know we love each other whether we're together or not, with the music we're always going to be apart at some point, thank God. But I love the idea that we cemented something we thought was beautiful. My son is like a great postscript.

"But I never wanted to get married. Not if I can help it. I think it's boring, everybody saying, 'Oh, you've settled down now.'

"Fuck *no*! You have to follow your own pursuits one way or other. One day you wake up and you love the fact that you're all alone and the next day you wake up and wish you were with somebody. You're always searching for the things you haven't got. I think that's where the drive comes in, though: 'How am I gonna knock myself out?' And I have a certain idea of how to do it. You can't do things just to fit in with the record company's schedule or even your fans. I love the people who love my music. But at the same time, it's fuck 'em. Cause if I didn't think that way I wouldn't be Billy Fucking Idol. I'd be some other schmuck in some other rotten band who no one gave a shit about.

"Everybody's out there waiting for my album, big fucking deal! It's not gonna kill anybody and it's certainly gonna hurt me more if I put out shit. 'Cause then I'll be standing there going, 'Well, why am I doing this?' So I'd rather wait four years, or three years, or two months—and then do it. Or if it's right, tomorrow." ✪

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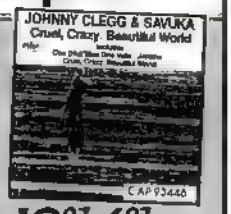

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Sonic Youth

continued from page 65

"I've tried hard not to make it like we're a couple within the band," says Kim. "I think that's one of the reasons why the band's lasted for however long. I mean, that could be so annoying for the other members of the band. Maybe it is.

"When Thurston and I are alone we don't really talk about the band or band business unless we absolutely have to. Otherwise you don't have any sort of separate life, and it becomes a 24-hour nightmare. But really, we were together when the band started, so it's hard to say what kind of effect it's had because we don't really know anything different."

In fact, the only real display of domesticity in evidence during the time I spent with this supremely domestic band ("And let's face it, rock 'n' roll domesticity is not interesting," says Kim) is when Thurston sets off to buy a new TV. (His landlord wasdoing some workon the building and blew the electricity, frying most of the appliances in Thurston's apartment—including, most importantly, the television.)

"Don't you want, like, a huge screen and everything?" he asks his wife.

"No, I don't. Get a Sony Trinitron. That's the best kind," says Kim.

"Nah, I'm gonna get a Hitachi SZ-100 something."

"Sony Trinitron, Sony Trinitron."

"Hitachi."

Later, I find out from Lee that Thurston bought the Hitachi.

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"The battle with record censors isn't an organized fight. This looks like an answer, though."—Joe Perry of Aerosmith

2 Live Crew

continued from page 37

What about the argument that this is part of black comic culture, that the people who are offended by 2 live Crew today are the same sort of people who were offended by Redd Foxx years ago?

The judge said no—2 Live Crew are not in the vein of Eddie Murphy's *Raw* or even Andrew Dice Clay. This is a non-comedic, non-satirical exploitation of women. And as for 2 live Crew being part of black culture, many black people don't think so, like Benjamin L. Hooks of the NAACP. 2 Live Crew are not reflective of black culture, they're reflective of the very worst in society whether it's white culture or black culture.

People in the hip hop community think that it's because 2 Live Crew are black that they're being persecuted. Why isn't Andrew Dice Clay being booked for obscenity?

I have, as a 35-year-old white man, made myself listen to all the rap that's out there that some people might say is obscene or sexually explicit. I've come to the conclusion that there's no other hip hop album that's obscene, in my opinion. I've also come to the conclusion that some rap music is very good entertainment. And as for Andrew Dice Clay, I'm the only guy, as far as I know, who has filed a complaint with the FCC about the *Saturday Night Live* show. I try to be an equal opportunity anti-sexually explicit crusader. I suggest that if 2 Live Crew were white, it would have been much easier to have mounted a campaign against them, because there wouldn't have been this phony racial argument that Luther Campbell and his disingenuous lawyers have been raising, despite the fact that the first judge who declared this album obscene was black.

I, as a white lawyer, am more than willing to admit that this is a racist country we live in. One of the truest indications of racism in this country is that there is very little being done to wage a drug war. Much of the violence has been in the black community, and white law enforcement has been content to let that violence rage as long as it stays in the black community. If the violence had been raging in the white suburbs, then we would have a *real* drug war. Now to compare that to the distribution of rap and hip hop in the white community, I think there's an element of truth in the accusation that the establishment was not aware of what was being sold to black kids until white kids started buying it. But is my motive to punish a black entrepreneur for selling black music to white kids? No. It's that anybody is selling this to anybody, regardless of color.

What about the argument that 2 Live Crew are merely aping, albeit in a more exaggerated, brutal form, the predominant values of mainstream America in the 80s: materialistic, macho, acquisitive?

I'd be the first to admit that American society is one that is tainted with materialism, misogyny, violence, sexual abuse, racism, anti-spiritualism. We live in the most depraved century of the history of man. However, does that disturbing landscape of America mean that we should give in to this moral cancer and that we should simply say there are no standards of human conduct, existential or eternal, or do we take a stand and say that values are worth fighting for, and more importantly, the women and children who are harmed by this are worth protecting?

Is this a personal vendetta?

I have repeatedly offered to meet with Luther to try and get some understanding of where we were going with this thing. Repeated efforts have failed. I wanted to resolve with Luther something that's put him in a very difficult situation. You know, I think the guy's talented. He's been a very successful businessman up until now. To me, one of the real tragedies is that this guy is on a collision course with personal annihilation as well as corporate annihilation. I'm interested in stopping Luther for his own personal eternal welfare, whether anyone wants to believe this or not.

Sitting in a topless donut shop in Fort Lauderdale—"If you like our tits, please leave tips" reads the sign on the wall—it's difficult to ascertain what exactly are those "community standards" that Charles Freeman offended when he sold a copy of *As Nasty As They Wanna Be* to an undercover cop at his local record store, Taking Home the Hits.

Broward County Sheriff Nick Navarro—the man who authorized the arrests of both Charles Freeman and, two days later, 2 Live Crew on obscenity charges—doesn't want to save Luther Campbell's soul from eternal damnation. He just wants him to obey the law, no matter how trivial or unjust that law might be.

On entering Navarro's office it's easy to see why Luther Campbell has dubbed the sheriff "a media freak." There's a veritable gallery of framed cartoons from local newspapers hanging on the wall, most of them making fun of Navarro's penchant for high-profile PR. There are also signed photos of Al Pacino, Bob Hope, Gloria Estefan, and a host of other celebrities. There's even an autographed boxing glove from Mohammed Ali.

What do you say to the criticism that there's too much serious crime in Broward County to spend so much energy on something so trivial?

NAVARRO: We are taking care of all serious crime in Broward County. We have not abandoned anything. I have not added one person to the unit that works this beat all the time. I have six people assigned—they work prostitution, they work gambling, they work pornography, they work obscenity. My agency has 3,000 people in it.

The *Miami Herald* reported that it took thirty officers, not six, to arrest 2 Live Crew after the Club Futura show.

There's a lot of exaggeration and lies in the media at the moment. I'm just doing my job. The *Miami Herald* is lying. They are anti-government, they are anti-everything. They are the crusaders, not me. [*Ed. note: The* Miami Herald *stands by its figure of 30 officers assigned to police the event, though not all were involved in the actual arrest.*]

The *Miami Herald* also implied that arresting 2 Live Crew was a move to further your political ambitions.

The *Miami Herald* is full of crap. I'm not going any place. I'm sixty years old and I've been a law enforcement officer for most of my life. I'm going from here to retirement, not into political office.

You're no stranger to media attention. Before 2 Live Crew, you were often featured on talk shows and in newspapers. Is all this media chatter essential for doing your job?

The media has helped us a lot in law enforcement—to find fugitives, to find missing persons, and in many other areas where we wouldn't have solved crimes if it wasn't for the help of the media. I have always had good relations with people in the media, but all of a sudden you folks are becoming a pain in the neck.

Isn't there something un-American about arresting people for obscenity?

I am a law-enforcement officer and I enforce the laws of this country. That is my job like your job is sitting there asking me these silly questions. My job is to enforce the laws, and even if they might be silly sometimes, I have to do it.

What do you say to people who claim that this is a racial thing—2 Live Crew are being prosecuted for obscenity because they're black?

I heard this argument in the courtroom from 2 Live Crew's attorneys, that this was the new black culture. I took offense at that because I know too many nice, decent, hardworking people in the black community for that to be true.

But what about the argument that 2 Live Crew are a legitimate representation of young black inner-city culture as opposed to bourgeois black culture?

How about the young black person who is a member of the church choir, who is a very devout individual, who is very studious and very earnest? You mean to tell me that 2 Live Crew represent him? I know a lot of kids who are trying to get on in the world and they're being pulled down by the likes of 2 Live Crew. 2 Live Crew are representative of these individuals? No, they're not. Uh-uh. No way. Let me set the record straight. This is not an attack on rap music generally—we have a rap group in the sheriff's office who perform at schools telling kids to stay off drugs and stay in school. ⊛

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LEE ATWATER'S ROCK'N'ROLL DIARY

August 3—Mikhail Gorbachev, homelessness, the defense budget—frankly nothing bothers me more than M.C. Hammer's latest hit, "U Can't Touch This." Art imitating life? More like a 7 Eleven smash and grab if you ask me. I got George Bush elected using exactly the same tactics, and if Hammer thinks I'm going to sit out in the cold while he makes a million, he's got another thing coming. The man owes me

August 4—It's 8:00 P.M., the State of the Union Address is coming up fast, and after three years we still don't have a single original accomplishment to present to the American people. Tomorrow morning—Hammer time.

August 6—Just heard the final mix for "State of the Union," and let me go on record and say that the Hammer has what it takes. Sampling the word "cautious" over JFK's Inaugural Address—if Hammer ever gets bored with what he's doing, he has a great future in this business. If we can only borrow those dancers, we'll give the American people a night they'll never forget.

August 8—New Jersey just passed a Milli Vanilli law, requiring that lip-syncing performers note their lack of personal involvement with their lyrics on concert tickets. Good thing admission to see the Vice President is by invitation only.

August 14—It's summertime, and the pro-choicers are back with the "Free Barbara Bush" signs. You'd think they would have learned their lesson with Willie Horton, but that's the wonderful thing about liberals: no sooner do they see someone behind bars than they start looking for the keys. I think Barbara's doing just fine where she is.

August 19—Has anyone noticed that there is no lunatic Bush relative? After 20 years of Julie Nixon, Betty Ford, Billy Carter, and Patti Davis, it's time to give everyone a break. True, Prescot wears topsiders with black tie, but I doubt the majority of the American people appreciate how crazy such an outfit really is. Cynics might point to Neil Bush's involvement with the Savings and Loan failures, but any businessman will tell you: At $250,000 a year, Neil's involvement is evidence of something other than insanity. Call it good business sense.

August 23—Polls show the President's approval rate has passed 70 percent. In other news, John Poindexter was sentenced to six months in prison and a $300 fine for lying to Congress about Iran-**contra**. The way things are going, I just might be able to scrounge up the money myself.

August 28—Of the 70 percent of the American people who approve of the President, 50 percent say Barbara reminds them of their mother and 50 percent enjoy the President's weekly appearance on **Saturday Night Live**. Thank God Dana Carvey's movie was such a bust.

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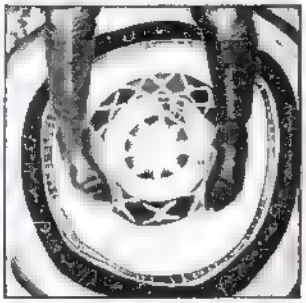

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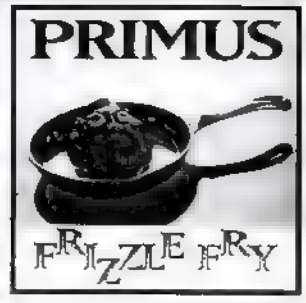

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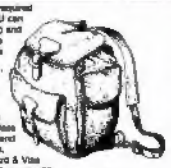

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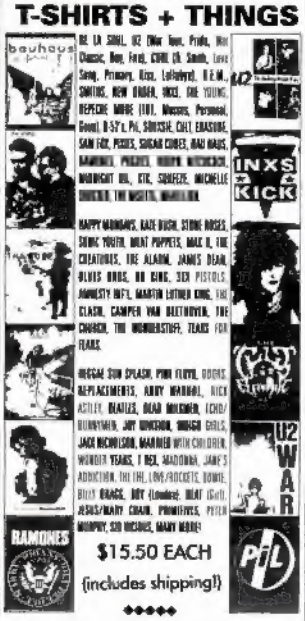

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POP QUIZ

by Ben Metcalf

1. Paul is . . .
a) the walrus.
b) dead.
c) touring too much.

2. Dennis Wilson was . . .
a) the real-life model for Dennis the Menace.
b) Heart's older brother.
c) the lucky one.

LONDON FEATURES

3. The correct Hendrix lyric is . . .
a) "Excuse me, while I kick this guy."
b) "Excuse me, while I kiss this guy."
c) "Tomorrow, while I kill this guy."

DAVE LEWIS/LFI

4. You are entering the supermarket and you bump into Debbie Harry, who is coming out through the "in" doors. You . . .
a) ask about Chris Stein.
b) ask to see her breasts.
c) both *a* and *b*, then report her to the manager for shoplifting.

5. Prince is . . .
a) a woman.
b) a man.
c) something that you'll never understand.

RON WOLFSON/LFI

6. Cher's current music would best accompany . . .
a) a documentary on the mating habits of rhinos.
b) a feature film, produced by Cher, directed by Cher, starring Cher.
c) other music played much louder.

7. N.W.A stands for . . .
a) Northwest Airlines.
b) non-smoking white asthmatic.
c) Nissan with air-conditioning.

8. The Beatles numbered . . .
a) five, if you count Stu Sutcliffe and Pete Best.
b) nine, if you count Stu Sutcliffe, Pete Best, and George Martin.
c) two, if you count John twice.

9. You are at an intimate record-industry party and you see David Crosby having a bad time. You . . .
a) ask him how his battle with cocaine is going.
b) harmonize with him on "Guinnevere."
c) ask him to get you Neil Young's autograph in exchange for cocaine.

10. Keith Richards looks like that because . . .
a) he smiled too much.
b) he didn't eat his greens.
c) he wouldn't stop touching his face.

11. Chuck Berry wrote "Lucille" about . . .
a) B.B King's guitar.
b) "Lucy," the Paleolithic skeleton whose discovery shocked the world.
c) Lucille Ball, who two-timed him with Desi Arnaz.

RON WOLFSON/LFI

DAVE LEWIS/LFI

12. Kiss's Gene Simmons reportedly has at least seven inches of . . .
a) cock.
b) makeup on, even without the mask.
c) credibility left.

13. Don McLean's song about "the day the music died" refers to . . .
a) Buddy Hackett, his boyhood friend.
b) the day the Plastic Ono Band album was released.
c) how badly his other tunes did on the charts.

14. Before forming the Grateful Dead, Jerry Garcia was . . .
a) a day dreaming table-saw operator.
b) an irresponsible mob soldier.
c) a problem nail-biter.

15. Your grandparents are visiting and Wavy Gravy drops by with several pounds of psychedelic mushrooms. You . . .
a) drop the intruder with a punch to the neck and tell your grandparents to call the police.
b) tell your grandparents you'll be "just a sec" and step into the hall for a few days.
c) let Wavy turn your grandparents on.

KRISTIN VRAA/LFI

16. Clapton is . . .
a) Buddha.
b) Siva the Destroyer.
c) washed up.

17. Joan Baez moves in with you and really changes your life. You . . .
a) do a tune about it.
b) encourage her to do an entire album about it.
c) fuck things up because you're too full of shit to admit anyone else is talented.

GRIFFIN/LFI

18. Prince is . . .
a) your lover.
b) your friend.
c) something that you'll never comprehend.

19. Bill Haley and the Comets were originally known as . . .
a) Tom and Jerry.
b) Bill Haley and the Vomits.
c) Bill Haley and the Speeding Balls of Ice and Celestial Debris.

20. 'Number Nine' played backwards yields . . .
a) 'Paul is deaf.'
b) 'George is stupid.'
c) 'number six.'

ANGIE COQUERAN/LFI

21. Madonna decides to take you up on your offer of marriage. You . . .
a) beat her up.
b) beat up other people.
c) use her clout in the music industry to get your brother a record contract.

22. Paul Simon was originally known as . . .
a) Tom.
b) Jerry.
c) Simon and Garfunkel.

23. You are a presenter at the Grammy awards. Gloria Estefan comes onstage to receive one. You . . .
a) tell her you're glad she's better.
b) tell her you're glad she's better, but that she doesn't deserve a Grammy.
c) congratulate her with a hard slap on the back.

24. Alana Harrison Stewart was married to . . .
a) Harrison Ford.
b) Jimmy Stewart.
c) no one of any importance.

25. Pamela Des Barres says hello to you at a party. You . . .
a) sleep with her.
b) ask what her husband has been doing since Power Station broke up, then sleep with her.
c) demand to see a complete sexual history before continuing the conversation.

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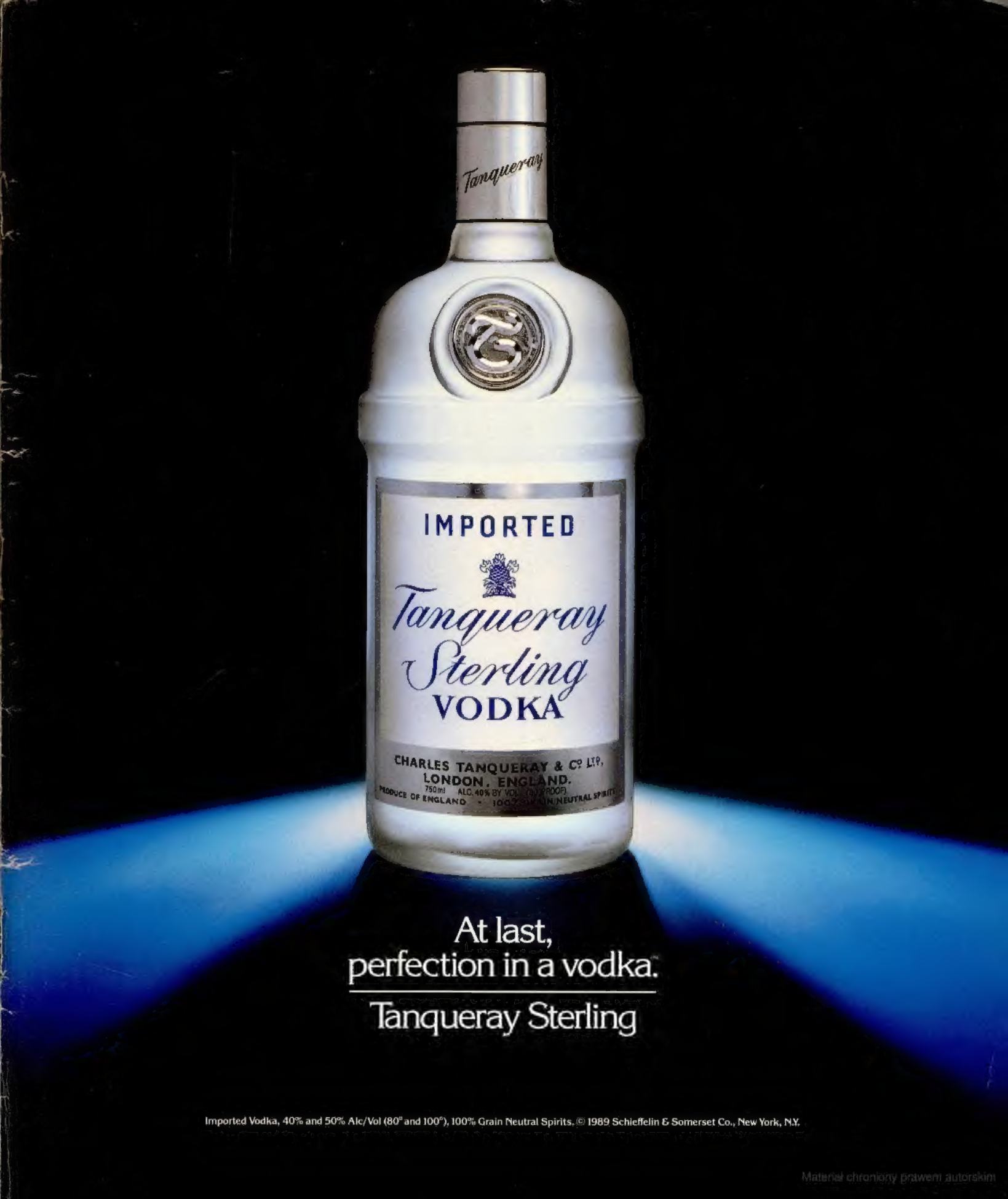

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